NEA Today
WASHINGTON, D.C. NOVEMBER 1995
A NEWSPAPER FOR
VOL.14
NO.4

'I used to feel intimidated by parents. Not any more.'

—Oklahoma teacher Bonnie Hammock see page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

You Call This Opportunity?

Throughout the summer and fall, Congressional leaders have waged a campaign to slash federal investments in education and training by an extraordinary $36 billion in coming years.

They've sought billions in cuts from Head Start, from college loans and aid, from programs for children with disabilities, and much more. Over 150 vital education initiatives—including the Goals 2000 effort to raise academic standards—would be wiped out in their entirety.

It's an ambitious, take-no-prisoners plan. But before this campaign escalates any further, may we ask a couple of questions?

Why has public education been singled out for this partisan assault? The new Congress claims a mandate for its budget-cutting priorities. But poll after poll shows overwhelming public support for federal investments in education.

The results of a Times-Mirror poll in August are typical: Seventy-six percent of Americans disapprove of cutting education to balance the budget, while only 21 percent approve.

Another question: How does this attack on education fit in with the Republican Party's positive vision of a Conservative Opportunity Society?

House Speaker Newt Gingrich says, "We simply must replace the welfare state with an opportunity society." And who would disagree?

Yet it's disingenuous—putting it politely—to talk of increasing opportunity at the same time Congress is enacting savage cuts in Head Start and in every K-12 education program, slashing college loans and scholarships, and seeking to dismantle even the most successful aspects of affirmative action. What opportunity will be left?

NEA President
Keith Geiger

Gingrich, for one, understands that poverty is the great killer of opportunity. In his new book, *To Renew America*, he laments that "poor children enter school with inadequate preparation and are behind from day one," and that "going to college has become an expensive ordeal that can permanently shatter a family's finances."

These sound like superb reasons for fully funding Head Start and expanding college loans. Instead, we confront a congressional juggernaut that is hell-bent on slashing those programs and, ultimately, terminating federal investment in education.

John Kennedy said, "To govern is to choose." On the road to a balanced budget, we all must be willing to accept harsh but necessary choices. We must be equally willing, however, to say "no" to foolish choices.

Congressional leaders have chosen to cut education by $36 billion to finance a capital gains tax cut that goes overwhelmingly to the wealthiest 5 percent of Americans. They have chosen to cut the school lunch program to help finance additional B-2 bombers at a cost of $1.6 billion each—and the Pentagon doesn't even want them. These are spectacularly foolish choices Congress has made.

Indeed, with Congress slashing education to the bone at the same time it's cutting taxes and boosting defense spending, I don't see efficiency-inspired economizing; I see an ideologically driven amputation.

Education has long been the great enabler and great equalizer. So it's sad when politicians who claim to champion opportunity choose to undermine the historic federal commitment in this field.

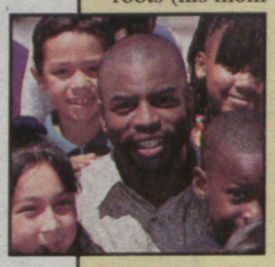
What if, instead, the newly elected majority had opened the 104th Congress by adding this eleventh item to its "Contract with America":

Congress intends to relentlessly cut wasteful spending and to eliminate unnecessary functions of government. At the same time, because we believe in expanding opportunity for all Americans, we pledge to accomplish what previous Congresses conspicuously failed to do: fully fund Head Start, Title 1, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and expand college grants and loans so that no qualified American is denied a higher education.

Now that has the ring of an opportunity society.

See story on page 3 for information about NEA's latest efforts to stop federal education budget cuts.

7 Meet LeVar Burton



Showing his commitment to the next generation and honoring his roots (his mom was a teacher), actor LeVar Burton advocates for quality kids' television programming. That explains why he's hosted "Reading Rainbow" for the past 13 years.

11 Big Dreams

In rural Kinston, North Carolina, school employees have totally overhauled their K-2 school. As a result their 277 students—all Black, nearly all poor—are getting a first-rate education. Says one teacher: "We believe anything is possible."

CONTENTS

15 Soundoff: A Delaware teacher examines academic life behind bars.

17 Legal: Do you have the right to teach your way—*and* keep your job?

23 ByteSize: Kids reach out online to a Pakistani boy, assassinated for speaking out against child labor.

27 Money: When it comes to investing, how much risk is right for you?

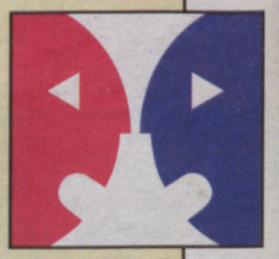
Books	28	National News	3
Free or Inexpensive	13	People	18
Grassroots	8	Research Clues	24
Human Rights	6	Retirement	33
Idea Exchange	25	SchoolSite	30
International	31	Trends	21
Letters	38	TV Tips	32

29 Dealing with Anger

How do kids learn to handle hot tempers? A psychotherapist and expert on anger in children suggests ways school employees can teach kids to channel their anger in productive, not damaging ways. Plus resources to help you in the classroom.

37 Debate: Should Kids Be Paid To Be Good?

Yes, argues a Florida media specialist: "It's the American dream to work hard and be rewarded." No, counters an Oregon teacher: "Stars and stickers and happy-grams" send the wrong message to our students.



Cover photo by Lisa Rudy Hoke

NEA Today November 1995
Vol. 14, No. 4

NEA TODAY is mailed to all NEA members. Annual subscription price: $2.81 (included in membership dues and available only as a part of membership). Institutional subscription price: $35.00 domestic and $54.00 foreign.

Copyright © 1995 by the National Education Association of the United States. All rights reserved.

NEA President: Keith Geiger

Executive Director: Don Cameron

Publisher: Sam Pizzigati

Production Manager: Penny Grayson

Editor: Bill Fischer

Assistant Editor: Stefanie Weiss

Production Specialist: Ann Marie Bohan

Advertising Coordinator: Suzanne Wade

Classified Advertising: Sherida McGhee

Staff Writers: Diane Dismuke, Karen Gutloff, Leona Hiraoka, Victoria Lytle, Anita Merina, Dave Winans

Publishing Center Manager: Lorraine Buckland

Production: Marsha Blackburn, Pat Tolliver, Alice Trued

Art Direction: William J. Kircher & Associates

NEA TODAY (ISSN 0734-7219) is published 9 times a year, monthly October, November, December, February, March, April, May, and biweekly in September by the National Education Association, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Second class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NEA TODAY, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

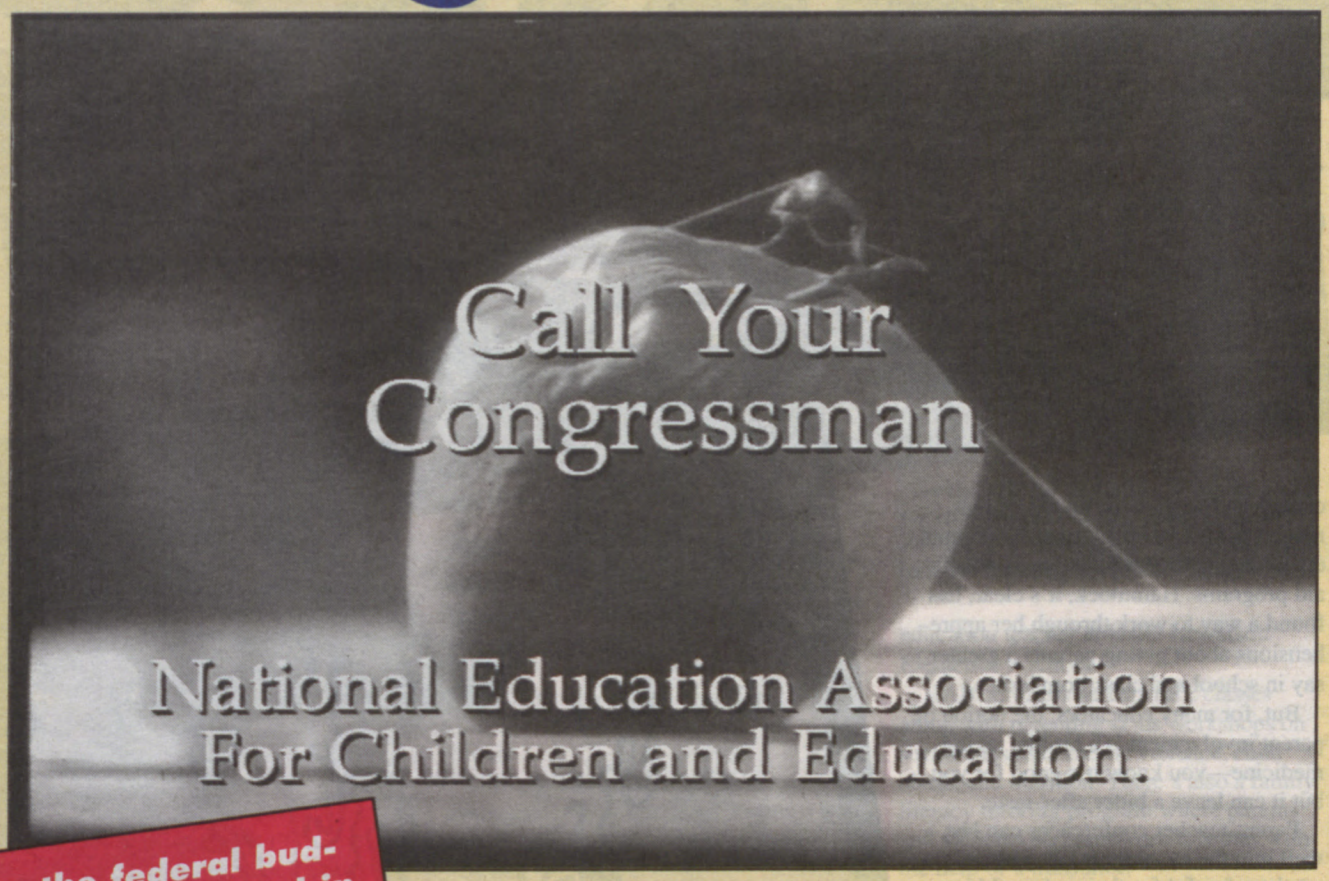
Telephone: 202/822-7207.

Unsolicited feature stories and news items are invited, but NEA TODAY can make no advance commitment to publish any manuscript. Manuscripts accompanied by self-addressed envelopes bearing sufficient postage will be returned within four months if rejected.

Although advertising is screened, advertisement does not imply NEA endorsement of the product or the views expressed.

NATIONAL NEWS

Slicing to the Core



As the federal budget debate raged in Congress this fall, NEA was alerting members and the public to the threats the cuts posed to children, families, and the future.

A camera pans across an empty classroom, then zooms in on a moldy apple left on the teacher's desk. The voiceover gets right to the point: *"Congress is cutting basic skills. . . Congress is cutting funding for safe and drug-free schools. . ."*

This NEA television spot was broadcast in targeted congressional districts early this fall as House and Senate members were debating a Fiscal Year 1996 budget that could slash federal education spending by roughly $4 billion—while adding tax cuts for the wealthy and billions more for the Pentagon.

The NEA TV ads were just part of NEA's "Campaign for Children and Education," a grassroots drive to alert Association members and the general public to the threats the cuts posed to children, families, and the future. The objective: Draw the connection between federal cutbacks and the classroom and motivate people to call or write their members of Congress.

"These are enormous cuts with devastating impact—the largest in history," NEA President Keith Geiger declared. "We won't let up the pressure until we know that children and education are safe."

In a press conference to announce the NEA campaign, Aaron Wallace, president of the Florida Teaching Profession-NEA, noted that his state's public school budget is already reeling from both a revenue cap and high prison construction costs.

"Now we face these federal cuts, including a slash in funding for basic and advanced skills that will deny assistance to 35,000 Florida students," Wallace explained.

The same week as the press conference, NEA activists fanned out across Capitol Hill to talk sense to lawmakers.

Dorothy Eachus from New Mexico, visited her senators, Jeff Bingamen and Pete Domenici.

"I expressed how I felt about about the Pentagon build-up—giving the Pentagon $6 billion it didn't even request—and asked them not to hurt the kids," she reported.

NEA's grassroots campaign is making an impact in places like Seattle, where the Seattle Education Association and school board jointly approached the press and explained the critical connection between federal aid and programs like drug education.

"The press picked up on this and made a real effort to understand our situation," said SEA President Bruce Colwell.

At press time, it appeared that the budget battle would continue into November. Here's what you can do:

➤Call your members of Congress at 202/224-3121 and urge them to oppose education cuts. Urge parents and your friends and neighbors to do likewise.

➤Ask President Clinton to keep his promise to veto education cuts. Call him at 202/456-1414.

➤Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper to educate the public about the impact of federal cuts.

—Dave Winans

Carolyn Salisbury

Joined by the presidents of three NEA state affiliates, Florida's Aaron Wallace (left), California's Lois Tinson, and Texas's Richard Kouri, NEA President Keith Geiger blasted federal budget cuts during a late September press conference.

HEROES & ZEROES

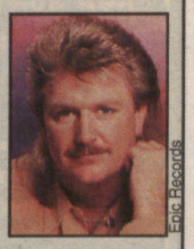
A Purple Heart for distinguished service to education and civil rights advocate Roger Segure. Now 90 years old, Segure still defends teachers in grievance and arbitration hearings, a task he's been at for 40 years. A former band leader, Segure worked to end segregation in the music world and merge the NEA and AFT locals in Los Angeles. When asked about his accomplishments, Segure shrugs. "I'm old," he says. "You can do a lot of things in 90 years."

Joe Di Dio

A soggy Cocoa Puff to the Chocolate Manufacturers Association for shameless hucksterism. Under the guise of a free lesson plan, the bon-bon makers distribute the "Chocolate Challenge" board game for kids in grades 4-6. Sample question: "Was it a) Thomas Jefferson or b) Daniel Peter who first spoke of 'the superiority of chocolate for both health and nourishment'?"

A peddler with far more integrity—George Freidhof, president of the New Hampton (Iowa) Education Association and biker extraordinaire. This past summer, Freidhof, along with 250 others, biked from coast to coast to celebrate Iowa's sesquicentennial. Total distance: 5,085 miles, and Freidhof biked every inch of the way.

Oh no, Joe! Tell us it ~~ain't~~ isn't so! Country singer Joe Diffie's got a hit song that salutes poor grammar and a music video that shows a busty-blonde-bimbo-teacher falling for and fawning over a student. Here's the chorus: "You got me feeling so G-U-D/It's more better than I thought it would be./Girl, I'm just a product of the public schools./I'm in love with a capital 'U'." Next.


Epic Records

Truth with a capital 'T' to *Washington Post* columnist Colman McCarthy who wrote glowingly of Michigan teacher Ellen Rogers, then advised readers to send a letter to a great teacher in their pasts. "And send a copy of the letter," he added, "to those in Congress who think that education reform is about vouchers, school prayer, and funding cuts. It isn't. Reform is best ensured by honoring the quality teachers now serving, and convincing more of the young to come into the profession and be like them."

COVER STORY

Do Parents Make You NERVOUS?

Be honest. Does talk about increasing parental involvement excite you—or make you break out in a cold sweat?

Bonnie Hammock's first parent-teacher conference left her reeling.

"A parent came up to me and wanted to know why her daughter wasn't doing well in my class," recalls Hammock, now a teacher at Gordon Cooper Vo-Tech in Shawnee, Oklahoma. "I thought, 'How dare you question me? I'm doing this, your daughter's not doing that, and that's just how it is!'"

"I wanted *my* classroom and *my* students," Hammock adds. "I didn't think parents should be involved."

Hammock now laughs at what she admits was clearly an overreaction. But, she adds, "I was intimidated."

Not anymore.

"Years ago, we teachers said 'we are the experts,' and we alienated parents," Hammock says. "Now we realize that we can't do the job by ourselves."

Now Hammock's pushing parental involvement in a big way. This spring, she worked with the Shawnee School District and the Oklahoma Education Association to create a "Parent University." Some 300 parents attended classes and workshops on topics that ranged from homework tips and computers in the classroom to college financial aid programs. Hammock, it's clear, has found a way to work through her apprehensions about giving parents a greater say in school and classroom issues.

But, for many educators, the notion of parent involvement is a bit like taking medicine—you know it's good for you, but it can leave a bitter after-taste.

Parent-teacher conferences can last well into the evening, making some teachers fearful for their safety. Many teachers find it difficult to break through language barriers with parents from other cultures. And, after a busy day in the classroom, the last thing some educators want to do is spend time writing notes, preparing newsletters, or making phone calls to parents.

"The biggest obstacle for teachers is time," says Hammock. "Teachers already have so much to do."

Educators like Hammock are trying to make time to involve parents—for one simple reason: Parent involvement pays big dividends for students.

"It's been proven time and time again that having parents active in school issues results in greater attendance, decreased discipline problems, and higher test scores," says Dorothy Rich, director of the MegaSkills Education Center of the Home and School Institute.

Rich's program trains parents to help their kids build academic skills as well as confidence, motivation, self-esteem, and other behaviors crucial to school success.

"Schools of education have not traditionally included this kind of training in their curriculum," says Warlene Gary, who works in NEA's Center for the Revitalization of Urban Education.

That's why NEA and its affiliates are taking the lead in giving educators around the country the training they need to reach out and connect with parents. The result: hundreds of innovative parent involvement projects.

In Greenville County, Virginia, teachers and counselors have turned an old mobile home into a Parent Resource Center on wheels, taking the school to hard-to-reach parents.

Teachers at Atenville Elementary School in Harts, West Virginia, gave up their teacher's lounge to create a parent resource room that has become a big draw.

And NEA affiliates in Iowa, Pennsylvania, Alaska, and Hawaii have created community campaigns that tout the benefits of parent involvement.

Here's a look at a few other programs making a difference:

Lisa Rudy Hoke

Bonnie Hammock, once fretful about parent involvement, now teaches early childhood education to high school students and adults and leads a teacher education course on parent and community involvement.

Parent Involvement Resources

➤ The MegaSkills Education Center of the Home and School Institute, 1500 Massachusettes Ave., N.W. Washington, DC 20005, 202/466-3633. Details on how to start your own training workshops for parents.

➤ *Building Parent Partnerships*, NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books, 800/229-4200. NEA members describe innovative projects they've created to build strong connections with parents. Available December 1995.

➤ National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, Box 39, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Guidelines to help schools and school districts create family/school partnerships.

➤ NEA Online. Use NEA's electronic service on America Online to exchange ideas with fellow NEA members. Check the Parent Involvement folder on the Teaching & Learning message board. Just keyword: NEA Teaching. For more information on how to sign up, see page 22.

Putting The PIECES Together

Parents in Newton, North Carolina, don't have to worry about taking a day off from work to meet with teachers to discuss their kids. Teachers and counselors come to the worksite and fill them in on what's happening at school. Project PIECES—Parents, Industry, Educators, Cooperating for Education Success—is a four-year-old program run by the Newton-Conover School District.

The school district struck an agreement with three major employers in the area to allow school counselors to visit parents on the job.

"Some parents became very nervous when they came into the schools," says

Craig Cunningham

As the school day ends, West Virginia teacher Nancie Vance (left) confers with parent volunteers who help manage her busy kindergarten class.

NEA member Susan McGee, a school counselor and director of the project. "So we provide a service at a site that's more comfortable to them."

The work site meetings have many benefits.

"Employers say it's time well spent because the employee doesn't have to take a day off to go to school," says McGee. "We've eliminated student attendance problems because of the monthly contact we have with parents."

Just Another Manic Monday

Few will admit it, but sometimes it takes a good gimmick to get parents to school. Just ask Beth Christensen, an eighth grade teacher at Dakota Meadows School in Mankato, Minnesota, who created Manic Mondays.

"We want parents to experience what a school day is really like for their kids," she adds. So one Monday morning each quarter, kids head off to stock shelves at Wal-Mart or answer office telephones, while parents struggle through math class, history, even gym.

Christensen says students send their parents to school with classroom schedules, locker combinations, even instructions on who to sit with at lunch time. At the end of the day, there's a ceremony for parents, complete with pomp and circumstance and a certificate of accomplishment.

"You have some fun, but parents really start to learn what their child's day is like at school," says Christensen. "And there's a real correlation between those who participate in Manic Monday and those who come back later to volunteer and pitch in."

Training, Training

Some school districts are wising up. Motivating hundreds of parents to get involved in a constructive way in their children's education, they now understand, can be a full-time job. That's why the Whitcomb Model Elementary School in Richmond, Virginia, hired education support employee Gregory Gilliam as a "parent resource coordinator."

Gilliam holds parenting workshops, oversees parent volunteers, develops and coordinates parent involvement activities, and helps NEA members—teachers and support workers alike—incorporate parents in their plans.

"Creating these opportunities forms a bond between staff and parents—particularly parents of at-risk children," says Gilliam. "As a result, the children do better having seen the adults in their lives care enough to work together."

HABLE—Helping Parents Speak Up

HABLE literally means "speak up" in Spanish. And that's what a three-year-old program in Las Vegas is helping Spanish-speaking parents do, particularly when it comes to their child's education. HABLE was started by NEA member Pricilla Rocha, a bilingual education teacher at Halle Hewetson Elementary School.

HABLE offers parents ESL classes along with parenting skills workshops on such topics as domestic violence, child abuse, and nutrition. There's also a family literacy tutoring program where parents and students do homework together with the help of a translator.

And HABLE also helps parents with job referrals, resume writing, housing and welfare applications.

"Parents weren't coming to the classroom to see how their children were doing because they couldn't communicate with the teacher," says Rocha. "We've helped them break through that language barrier and now they can communicate their needs."

The program recently received a $150,000 grant from the city of Las Vegas to expand its efforts.

—Karen Gutloff

To read about another successful parent-involvement program, see Innovation, page 11.

Chuck Burton

North Carolina's Newton-Conover school district brings school counselors like Susan McGee into local factories to keep working parents abreast of student progress.

Ten Ways To Make Your School Unfriendly

Does your school unwittingly turn parents off? The answer might be yes if the practices listed below sound familiar.

1. **Post a sign at the school entrance: "All Parents Report to the Principal's Office."**
2. **Publish school newsletters and other written communication in English only.**
3. **Schedule parent-teacher meetings during daytime hours only.**
4. **Design a report card that reads like a bank loan application.**
5. **Wait until mid-way through the school year to introduce yourself to parents.**
6. **Call parents only when you have bad news to report about their child.**
7. **Have teachers and principals lead all parent conferences.**
8. **Tell parents you know what's best for their child.**
9. **Make a point of reminding parents they have no role in curricular decisions.**
10. **Lock school doors, turn off the lights, and take the phone off the hook promptly at 3 p.m.**

HUMAN RIGHTS

Separate But Equal?

Bob Riha, Jr.

California math teacher Pam Belitski believes her all-female math classes allow girls to gain confidence in their math skills—and in themselves.

Are girls-only math and science classes a violation of civil rights law?

Pam Belitski was in her second year of teaching "all-girls math" at Anacapa Middle School in Ventura, California, when she found out she was the subject of an inquiry by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

Belitski's class was intended to boost girls' achievement in math and participation in higher-level math classes. Students who chose to participate followed the same curriculum as regular seventh and eighth grade math classes—the sections simply enrolled all girls.

Not long after a favorable story about Belitski's classes appeared in the *New York Times*, a group of New Yorkers charged the Ventura school district with violating Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination in schools that receive money from the government.

"What I'm trying to do isn't meant to discriminate against any students," Belitski says. "Good teachers do what they can to develop strategies to help students who are struggling—and girls aren't performing as well in high school math as boys.

"Research shows the girls are intimidated by the boys, especially in math and science classes," Belitski continues. "This class helps them develop their self-esteem in math and find their voice in the classroom. They improve their math skills and learn how to cope in the co-ed learning environment."

It's not hard to find those who disagree. In an *NEA Today* debate (February 1995), Illinois math teacher Ed Bleeden argued that segregating classes by sex eliminates peer role models and keeps both sexes from developing the skills they need to work together.

"Boys and girls need to be around each other so they can learn how to relate in all situations," Bleeden wrote. "They're going to be interacting with each other throughout their lives—separating them won't help girls learn to hold their own."

His solution? Teachers should work harder to involve girls in the classroom and to treat girls the same way they treat boys.

The debate continues, but the question remains: Are all-girl math classes legal?

Deborah Brake, an attorney from the National Women's Law Center who specializes in education law, says yes, depending on the way the class is designed.

She says one of the regulations for implementing Title IX permits affirmative action programs to help overcome conditions that have limited participation of persons of a particular gender.

Even though the regulation has been on the books for more than 20 years, Brake is aware of only one case, *Garrett v. Board of Education of the School District of Detroit*, that has tested it.

Based on that case and the history of affirmative action in the courts, Brake suggests that teachers of single-sex classes can prepare for legal challenges by being able to:

➤ Define the problem the program is attempting to correct. "Document evidence that the group is being discriminated against," Brake says. "You can use scores, student career choices, or research to show that girls are being discouraged from math and science, and that without early intervention, the discrepancies between the sexes widen."

➤ Show that segregating by sex is directly related to improving the situation of this group. "Keep a record of what other alternatives were looked into and why it was decided that a single-sex class is the best solution," Brake advises.

The Ventura case never made it to court because, although no boys had enrolled, the Office of Civil Rights found the classes had technically been open to both sexes all along.

To make its open enrollment policy clearer, the district changed the name of the class to Power Learning for Underrepresented Students—or PLUS math, for short.

"Once we had answered their questions about the program, the Office of Civil Rights commended us on our efforts," Belitski says. "What started out as a slap on the wrist turned into a pat on the back."

—Jillian Safer

WASHINGTON WATCH

Nothing's sacred to Congress

At press time, the Senate was poised to vote on unprecedented funding cuts aimed squarely at education and children—in everything from basic skills training to Medicaid. Next, House and Senate conferees were to reconcile their versions of the spending package and submit their cuts to both chambers for a final vote. President Clinton would then approve or veto the package. He had indicated he would give kids and schools high fiscal priority. NEA members continue to urge the President to veto any spending measure that cuts funding for children and education.

Which comes to your role...

The president's veto power over education budget cuts is just one reason why Association members need to be involved in next year's presidential campaign. Based on your input—including member feedback from presidential forums and the incumbent president's record on education issues—NEA President Keith Geiger will recommend to the NEA-PAC Council whether or not to support President Clinton in the primary election.

Who's the candidate?

In December, the NEA-PAC Council will decide if Clinton gets the nod. If the council votes not to recommend the incumbent president, it will then consider all viable candidates.

Now back to you...

You can make an impact on both Campaign '96 and the budget debate by:

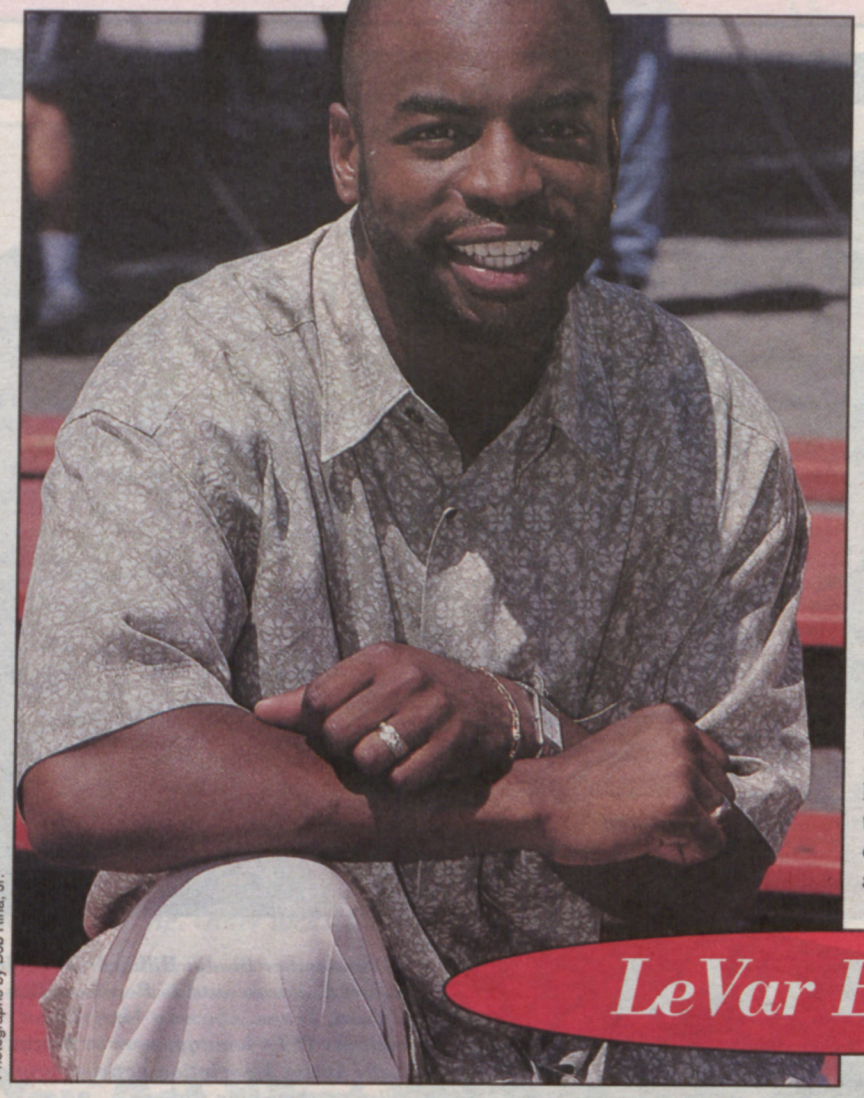
➤Communicating your views on President Clinton's performance to your state affiliate president.

➤Sending a letter of support to Clinton if he vetoes cuts affecting kids and schools.

Poli-tidbit

In November 1996, there will be elections for 33 open seats in the Senate, and every seat—435—in the House. Stateside, 11 gubernatorial races will be decided. In the legislatures, 1,202 state senate seats and 4,787 lower house seats will be up for grabs.

Meet:



Photographs by Bob Riha, Jr.

LeVar Burton

Standing Up For Quality TV

It's Saturday, but the playground at Wadsworth Elementary School in the Los Angeles neighborhood known as Watts buzzes with activity. Camera crews, photographers, and producers scurry around, shouting to be heard above the excited chatter of two dozen children tossing balls and jumping rope for the camera.

On the sidelines, actor LeVar Burton paces silently, mentally rehearsing his lines, getting ready for Take #3. Burton, the long-time host of public television's "Reading Rainbow," is here to tape a special episode entitled "Act Against Violence: A Family Special."

During a break in the taping, Burton, known for his role in television's "Roots" and "Star Trek: The Next Generation," spoke with* NEA Today *writer Karen Gutloff.

You've been on a lot of adventures with "Reading Rainbow," including a visit to an erupting volcano. What's that like?
Incredibly exhilarating. Beautiful. Exciting and scary. Exactly what life should be, as far as I'm concerned. I've flown a stunt plane on this show, gone hot air ballooning, and learned how to scuba dive.

We've done a lot of stuff that I consider very much in keeping with my philosophy: keep challenging yourself and broadening your perspectives.

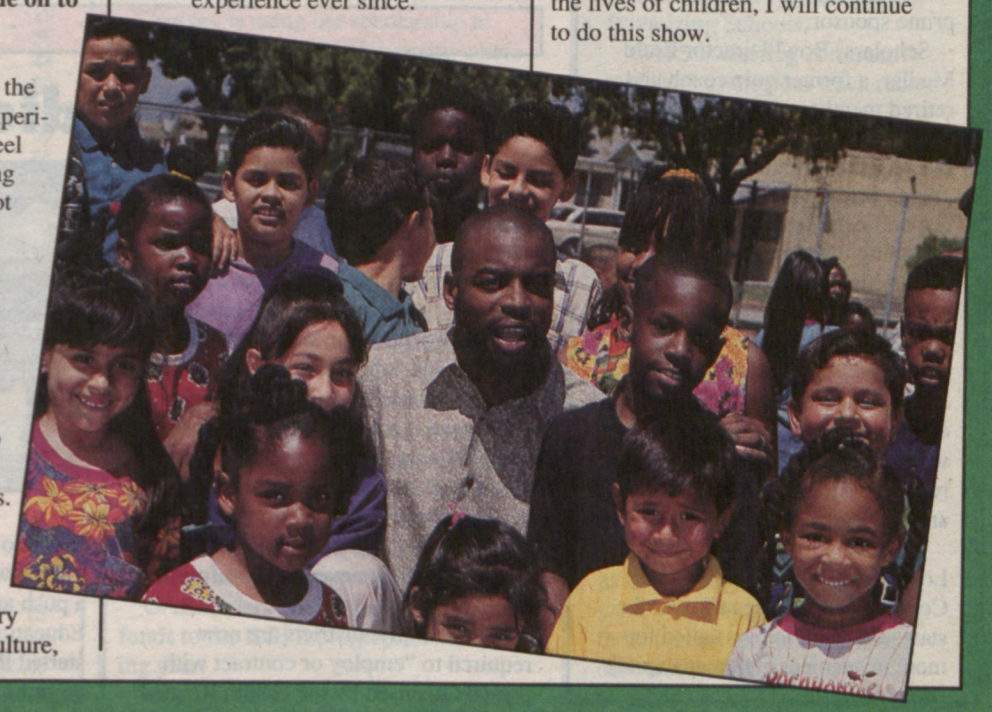
Are you passing that attitude on to kids?
I hope so. If a kid watches "Reading Rainbow" and gets the message that having many experiences is part of life—hey, I feel like I did a good thing. Tasting life, that's what it's about. Not being afraid.

You spoke up loudly when Congress threatened to cut public television programming.
Yes. For 10 years, I've made my biannual trip to the Hill to put in my two cents. It's a shame that we've come to this. It's silly and it's reckless.

Public television is the only commercial-free sanctuary where we, as parents in this culture, are guaranteed that our children will be nurtured while sitting in front of the tube instead of being sold to. We're not trying to sell anything on public television. Our agenda is to teach, to empower, enlighten, uplift in some way—not to sell.

Your mom was an English teacher. Is that where you got your love of reading?
Yeah, from mom. One of the things that I'll always be grateful for is that my mother always stressed the importance of reading. She's a voracious reader herself, so I grew up in a household where reading was not just expected, it was a normal, everyday part of life. I think that was really critical for me in developing a love and passion for reading.

What was your favorite book as a child?
Captain's Courageous by Rudyard Kipling was the book that was a turnkey experience for me. While reading that book, I got the magic and power of reading. I became consciously aware of being transported to another place—I was no longer on my bed in my room in South Sacramento, California. I've been chasing that experience ever since.



You entered the seminary as a young man. Why didn't you stay?
I've always struggled in my life to find a balanced way of living in this world as a spiritual warrior. At one time in my life, I thought that my spiritual side would be best served by wearing a collar.

I left the priesthood after I explored how other cultures around the world looked at spirituality and man's relationship with God. I now know there is truth in all walks.

Whether I'm dealing with my spiritual practice or learning how to act, my feeling has been to expose myself to as many different points of view as I can, take what makes sense to me, and leave the rest.

"Reading Rainbow" confronts some critical social issues facing kids. Why not just read to them?
This is probably the most difficult time for kids to grow up. The family doesn't look the way it did 100 years ago or even 25 years ago.

We've been able to push the envelope and do shows, for instance, on what the important ingredients are for a family. We said in our adoption show that the family you come from may have only a mother in the home, or only a father, or two parents of the same sex. It doesn't matter.

The important ingredients in a family system that works are love and support.

"Reading Rainbow" is a real labor of love for you, isn't it?
Oh absolutely! I do this show because I believe that "Reading Rainbow" is an alternative. There is a lot of programming that's aimed at children and precious little of it that's actually healthy for them.

As long as I feel that we are making a valuable contribution, not only to the landscape of television, but to the lives of children, I will continue to do this show.

Grassroots

State

WISCONSIN

The raid on the Wisconsin Retirement System in 1987 was illegal, and the state must repay the money. So ruled the state appeals court in a case brought by the Wisconsin Education Association Council and other unions.

The court found that the governor and legislature ran afoul of the law by using pension funds instead of general tax money to pay for increased benefits for pre-1974 retirees. The state has appealed the ruling, which could cost it more than $200 million.

IOWA

"Public Education Works"—that's the message Iowa residents will see everywhere this fall and winter, from the Iowa edition of *Newsweek* and regional newspapers to television ads on Iowa Presidential Caucus Night, February 12.

The media campaign, coordinated by the Iowa State Education Association, includes a parental involvement brochure that will be printed—then distributed in 234 grocery and drug stores—by Hy Vee/Drug Town, Iowa's largest employer.

VERMONT

When contestants from 32 high schools gather for this year's Vermont Scholars' Bowl, they'll gaze at a quiz master, a scoreboard, and a big blue Vermont-NEA sign. That's because the Association is now the Bowl's prime sponsor.

Scholars' Bowl Director Erald Medlar, a former quiz coach and retired member of Vermont-NEA, says this "nice affiliation" with the Association will pump new energy into the 12-year-old contest and help it meet expenses—including the high cost of researching questions.

ALASKA

Concerned by the state's current $513 million deficit—a result of declining oil revenues coupled with rapid population growth—representatives of NEA-Alaska are speaking out.

Testifying in September at Long-Range Financial Planning Commission hearings all over the state, Association reps called for more investment in human capital.

IN THE LONE-STAR STATE

Blue Ribbons Tie Texas Schools Together

TSTA

TSTA member Elodia Hilliard ties a blue ribbon to a tree outside Permian High in Odessa, Texas. Above: a blue ribbon addorns TSTA headquarters in Austin. Left: Austin Association activists proudly display their blue ribbons.

From Brownsville in the south, north to Amarillo, from El Paso in the west, east to Houston, blue ribbons are flying in Texas to celebrate public education.

The ribbons are the symbol for the substance: Texas schools, despite their problems, are doing a good job of educating the state's nearly 4 million students.

That message is the centerpiece of the Texas State Teachers Association's two-year campaign that began last summer.

"We're not trying to cover over the warts," explains Texas State Teachers Association President Richard Kouri. "We know there are many improvements that must be made in our schools. But this campaign is saying: 'Wait a minute, while we're working to improve our public schools, let's not forget that our school system succeeds in large and small ways every day.'"

Those success stories have been on the tips of TSTA members' tongues in local forums, on radio talk shows, in op-ed articles, and in letters to the editor.

Kouri notes that some lawmakers have the mistaken perception that Texas public schools are failing, but statistics and studies say that's not so.

Kouri notes that dropout rates in Texas, for example, are down nearly 50 percent since 1987, despite the fact that inflation-adjusted state funds spent per pupil haven't increased since 1984.

The public's response to the blue ribbon campaign has been overwhelmingly positive. TSTA members plan to keep the momentum going until the Texas legislature reconvenes next year.

IN TENNESSEE

Practicing Medicine? Get a License!

If you're a non-medical Tennessee school employee who performs procedures on students with disabilities—everything from suctioning to catheterization— you now risk being cited for "practicing medicine without a license."

That's the substance of a long-overdue memo, released earlier this year by Tennessee special ed administrator Joseph Fisher. The new policy is forcing school districts to scramble for qualified medical personnel—and allowing teachers and support personnel to stop doing what they never felt comfortable doing anyway.

Quite simply, districts are now required to "employ or contract with persons licensed by the Health Related

Board to perform medical procedures. . ."

This wouldn't have happened without a push and a shove from Tennessee Education Association members. TEA started the ball rolling in January by winning passage of a legislative resolution to study the needs of disabled students and "alternative ways to provide medical or related services."

Fisher released his memo just before the issue moved to joint Education Oversight Committee hearings. "It only got issued because we turned up the heat," stresses TEA staffer Kathy Wheeler.

During two days of hearings, the Association—through testimony by TEA President Kathy Woodall and teachers from across the state—emphasized that assignment of medical duties to classroom employees is dangerous and cuts into traditional teaching time.

Next on TEA's agenda? Stopping the dispensing of prescription medications by school employees.

A GOOD TIME FOR A GOOD CAUSE. New Jersey teens take part in Field Day activities sponsored by the East Rutherford Education Association. The event was part of the statewide "Our Public Schools Work" campaign designed by the New Jersey Education Association to let the public know the good job public schools are doing. Other locals have sponsored similar community events.

TAX FACTS

You Get What You Pay For

In some areas of the country, state taxes are the major source of revenue. In other areas, local taxes provide the lion's share of school funds.

Here's how the states stack up when you put state and local taxes together. Rank 1 indicates the highest taxes per $100 in personal income.

State-Local Revenue from Major Taxes per $100 Personal Income in 1992

State/ Region	Total Taxes	Rank	State/ Region	Total Taxes	Rank
UNITED STATES	**$11.48**		Arkansas	10.60	35
New England	11.44		Florida	10.17	42
Connecticut	11.80	16	Georgia	10.58	36
Maine	12.42	8	Kentucky	11.49	20
Massachusetts	11.20	27	Louisiana	11.07	29
New Hampshire	10.07	45	Mississippi	10.10	44
Rhode Island	11.39	22	North Carolina	10.93	30
Vermont	12.89	7	South Carolina	10.36	41
Mid Atlantic	**13.13**		Tennessee	9.05	50
Delaware	11.70	18	Virginia	10.05	46
Maryland	10.49	39	West Virginia	11.38	23
New Jersey	11.90	13	**Southwest**	**11.11**	
New York	15.47	2	Arizona	12.34	9
Pennsylvania	11.19	28	New Mexico	12.34	10
Great Lakes	**11.21**		Oklahoma	10.57	37
Illinois	10.78	34	Texas	10.85	32
Indiana	10.44	40	**Rocky Mountain**	**11.17**	
Michigan	11.70	17	Colorado	10.54	38
Ohio	10.83	33	Idaho	11.53	19
Wisconsin	13.06	4	Montana	11.41	21
Plains	**11.12**		Utah	11.83	14
Iowa	11.94	12	Wyoming	12.96	6
Kansas	10.86	31	**Far West**	**11.58**	
Minnesota	12.98	5	Alaska	18.36	1
Missouri	9.26	49	California	11.35	24
Nebraska	11.27	26	Hawaii	13.82	3
North Dakota	11.32	25	Nevada	10.14	43
South Dakota	9.62	47	Oregon	12.00	11
Southeast	**10.33**		Washington	11.81	15
Alabama	9.31	48			

Center for the Study of the States, based on data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

IN GEORGIA

Hope Means Help For Educators

Coffee County middle school teacher Pat Spivey is back in school, but not at the blackboard, thanks to HOPE, the Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally program.

HOPE has allowed Spivey and 1,500 other teachers to take, at state expense, advanced courses that will further their careers and make them better educators.

Spivey is using her scholarship to attend Valdosta State University where she's pursuing a master's degree in counseling.

"Without that scholarship," says Spivey, "I couldn't have gone back to college."

The program was the brainchild of Governor Zell Miller and drew strong support from the Georgia Association of Educators when it was established in 1993 with $10 million raised by lottery ticket sales.

HOPE was originally established to encourage college students to become teachers. Any Georgia student who graduates with a *B* average or better can apply for a HOPE scholarship and receive tuition, a book allowance, and payment of mandatory student fees.

GAE leaders are hoping to add more funds to the HOPE program in the coming year.

Local

CALIFORNIA

Members of United Teachers/Los Angeles ratified a contract that will, in the next two years, restore teacher salaries to what they were in 1991, the year an economic downturn caused deep funding cuts. In the third year, UTLA members will get an additional 1 percent raise.

The agreement also provides for sharing of new state revenues with staff, a $1,000 increase for experienced teachers at the top of the scale, and salary and benefit guarantees should the district be broken up into smaller jurisdictions.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The Irmo Chapin Education Association has won pay raise parity for education support personnel—a state first.

Support workers will now receive salary increases at the same rate as teachers—bringing them hikes of 7 percent a year (with step increases) for each of the next three years.

Behind ICEA's clout: an aggressive political action program that's helped elect five of the seven incumbent board members and a recruitment drive that's brought in 100 new members in two years.

PENNSYLVANIA

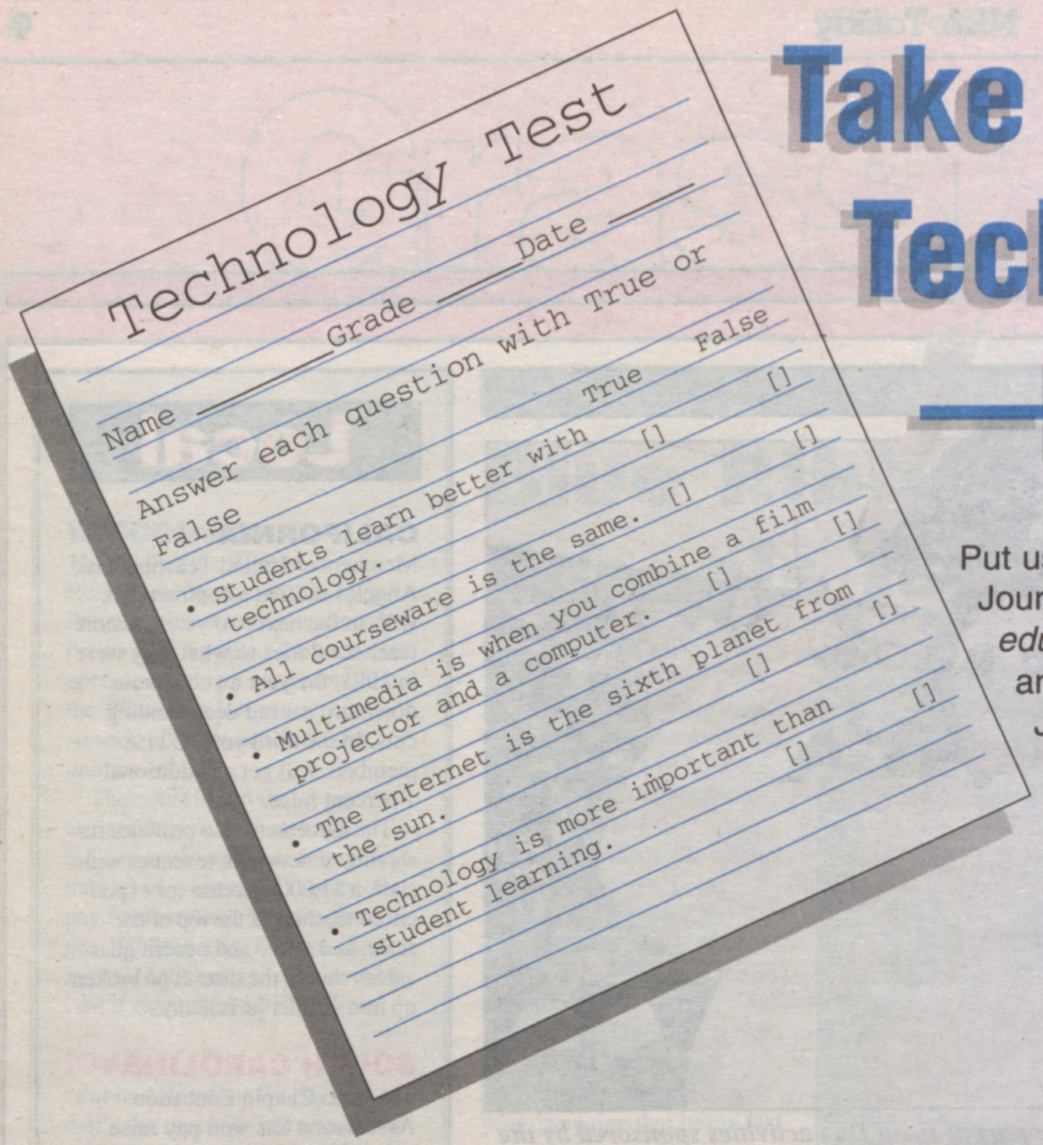
Alarmed by a school board threat to bring in for-profit school management, Clearfield teachers and support staff joined with parents and other community residents to form Clearfield Against Privatizing Schools.

CAPS is alerting community members to the poor track record of one potential vendor—Education Alternatives, Inc. (EAI)—and encouraging taxpayers to grill the school board over its motivation and plans.

TEXAS

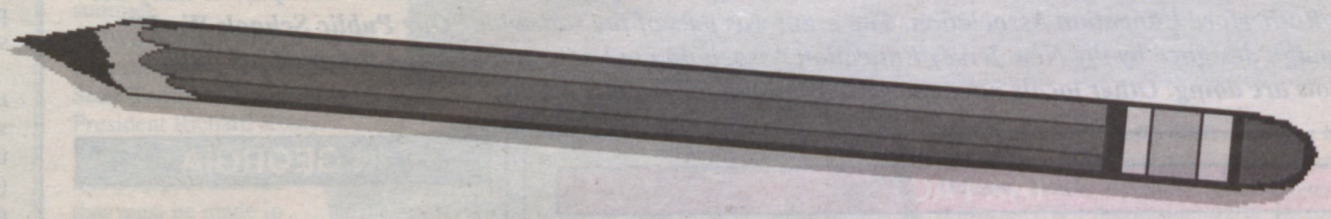
On this year's first day of orientation for new educators, the Classroom Teachers of Dallas gained 207 members.

That's a tribute to the local's organizing program—which encourages Association representatives and members to recruit non-members—and CTD's role as "watchdog." One scheme the local's watching is a district plan to tie teacher evaluations to student test scores.


Technology Test
Name _____ Grade ____ Date ____
Answer each question with True or False
True False
• Students learn better with technology. [] []
• All courseware is the same. [] []
• Multimedia is when you combine a film projector and a computer. [] []
• The Internet is the sixth planet from the sun. [] []
• Technology is more important than student learning. [] []

Take the Technology Test —It's Free!

Put us to the test! A ***FREE*** subscription to T.H.E. Journal is waiting for you *as long as you are an educator.* There is no need wondering about the answers, get your *free* subscription to T.H.E. Journal and learn about the latest in technology, and how it can help you.



T.H.E. Journal has been helping educators answer their questions about educational technology for over 23 years.

And now, here is your offer for a FREE subscription. Don't miss out on this test-shattering offer! Subscribe TODAY!

To subscribe:

Online subscriptions at our World Wide Web site: www.thejournal.com
Fax: 714-730-3739 coupon or letter with the subscription information.

T·H·E
TECHNOLOGICAL HORIZONS IN EDUCATION
JOURNAL

☐ **Yes, I want a FREE subscription to the leading educational technology magazine.**

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

_____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

MY TITLE (check only one)

District or School
A ☐ K-6 B ☐ 7-12
1 ☐ Supt. or Asst. Supt.
1 ☐ Principal
1 ☐ Administrator
1 ☐ School Board Member
2 ☐ Head Librarian
3 ☐ Department Chair
4 ☐ Computer Coordinator
5 ☐ Ed. Consultant

Director of:
2 ☐ Learning Resources
4 ☐ Computer Center
8 ☐ Curric./Instruc'l Mtls.
9 ☐ Vocational Education
9 ☐ Continuing Education
10 ☐ Guidance
11 ☐ Media/AV/TV
12 ☐ Director of_____
13 ☐ State Dept. of Education
14 ☐ Comp. Using Educator

College or University
20 ☐ President
20 ☐ Vice President
20 ☐ Administrator
20 ☐ Dean
23 ☐ Department Chair
25 ☐ Ed. Consultant
50 ☐ Bookstore Manager
Faculty:
52 ☐ Dept. Architecture
53 ☐ Dept. Business
54 ☐ Dept. Medical
55 ☐ Dept. Comp. Sci.
56 ☐ Dept. Education
57 ☐ Dept. Engineering
58 ☐ Dept. English
59 ☐ Dept. Humanities
60 ☐ Dept. Lang. & Lit.
61 ☐ Dept. Social Sci.
62 ☐ Dept. Journalism
63 ☐ Dept. Sci. & Math
64 ☐ Prof./Other Faculty

Director of:
26 ☐ Computer Center
26 ☐ Academic Computing
26 ☐ Admin. Computing
27 ☐ Learning Resources
27 ☐ Library
28 ☐ Instruction Materials
29 ☐ Continuing Education
30 ☐ Media/AV/TV
31 ☐ Guidance
33 ☐ Telecommunications
32 ☐ Other _____

Industry Training & Manpower Development
40 ☐ Industry/Business
41 ☐ Hospital/Med. School
42 ☐ Govn't/Military/Prisons
43 ☐ Non-Profit/Society
44 ☐ Private Vocational Business School

NOT VALID WITHOUT SIGNATURE AND DATE

X_____ _____
SIGNATURE DATE

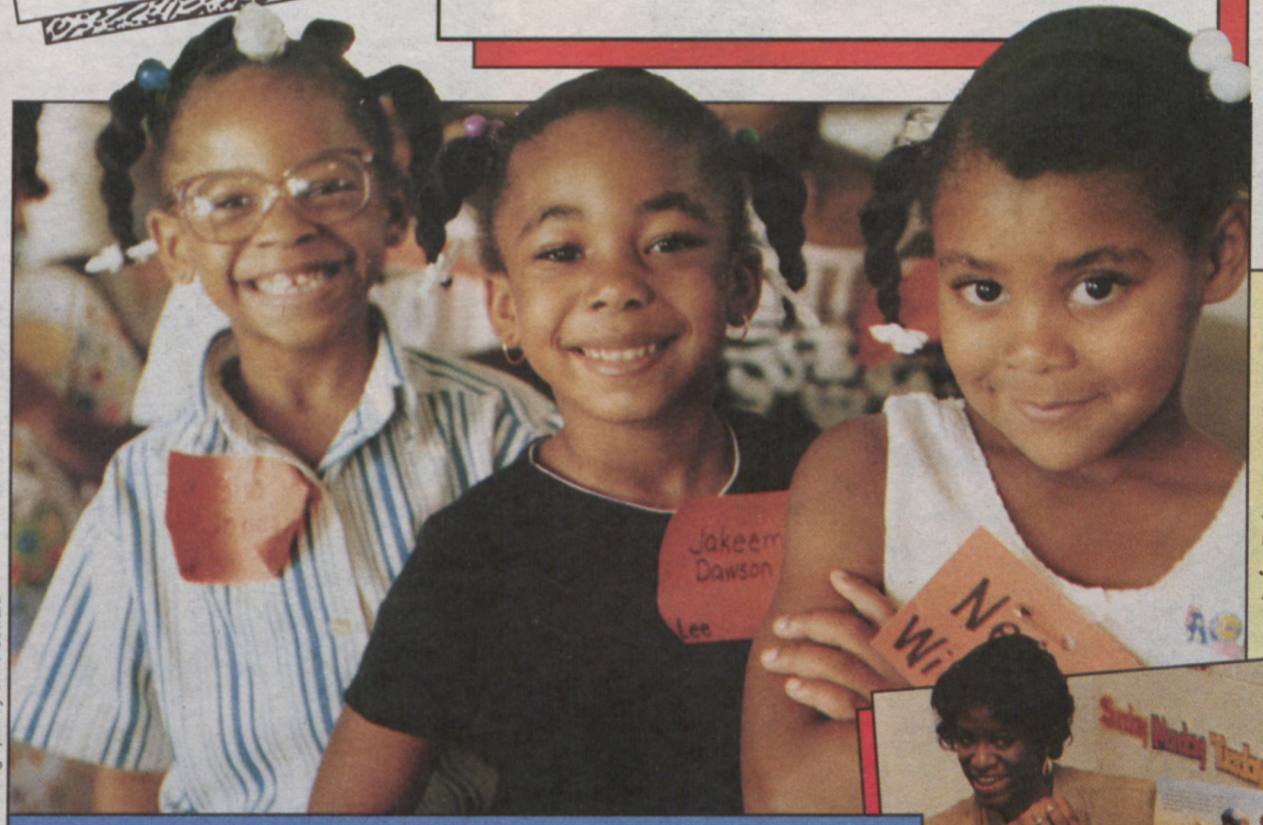
Send to T.H.E. Journal 150 El Camino Real, Suite 112
Tustin, CA 92680 • (714) 730-4011

NEA109501

T.H.E. Journal is a Free subscription magazine for educators. No charge for renewals.

Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work



Photographs by Chris Seward

The Power of Positive Dreaming

Everybody's got dreams—the trick's making them come true. In rural Kinston, North Carolina, the staff of a small K-2 school in a poor community did just that.

Nestled amid the tobacco farms and small businesses of eastern Carolina, Teacher's Memorial serves a poor community in Kinston. Ninety percent of the 377 K-2 students receive free or reduced lunches, and 50 percent have parents who are unemployed.

The 58-member staff wanted the best for their students, and eight years ago they decided that meant dealing with the shortage of parental involvement and surplus of top-down decision making they faced every day.

Today Teacher's Memorial:

➤ is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, and 9 to 12 on Saturday mornings for parent conferences.

➤ has telephones in every classroom, plus three classroom computers networked to the school library and to 13 different CD-ROM titles.

➤ has four after-care programs for children all over town.

➤ sponsors a mobile library unit to visit the neighborhood housing projects and get kids and parents interested in reading.

➤ has put the staff in charge of the school's budget, curriculum, schedule, and personnel decisions. There's even a planning committee whose sole purpose is "to dream."

➤ has a policy where the principal doesn't spend more than $100 without first discussing it with his staff.

"Student scores are up, and in our annual surveys, 96 percent of our parents are thrilled with our changes. It's a real community school," says special ed teacher Terry Wooten.

"All this—and none of it by accident," notes Laura Lavin, a music teacher and president of the Lenore County Association of Educators.

In 1987, school staff, together with the school principal Stephen Scroggs, began working with the Consortium for the Advancement of Public Education, a North Carolina project dedicated to school restructuring.

"We created five main committees in charge of personnel, finance, scheduling, curriculum, and planning," explains Wooten, who serves on the personnel committee. "Anyone can take part."

The result? "A school in which even the smallest suggestion by staff or parent carries great weight and anything is possible," says kindergarten teacher Betty Lou Brown.

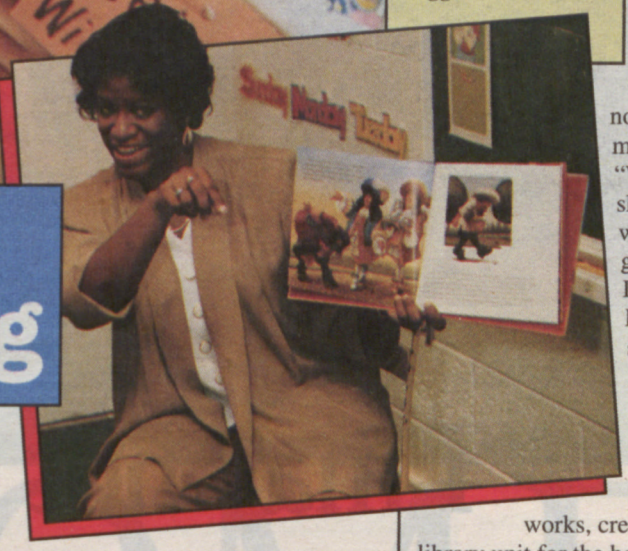
"For a school in which 70 percent of the students have single parents, our efforts have made a difference," Scroggs notes.

To increase daily contact with parents, teachers meet them and exchange comments when kids are dropped off in the morning. And they got rid of the sign that read, "Visitors must check in at the office. Trespassers will be prosecuted."

To reduce the instruction time teachers and teacher assistants spent at the copying machine, an in-house, fully staffed print shop was created.

To increase planning time, staff developed a new school schedule slotting all resource classes for each grade—art and music, for example—for the same time period. That frees the classroom teachers to meet and discuss improvements in classroom techniques. And staff redesigned report cards to more accurately reflect student progress.

Special ed teacher Terry Wooten (below) says having the chance to improve her school means building a brighter future for Teachers Memorial students like (left to right) Sharla Jones, Jakeem Dawson, and Neira Wiggins.



To make technological improvements possible, "We became skilled at grant writing," says first grade teacher Donna Henderson, who serves on the finance committee. "Those grants enabled us to set up computer networks, create the mobile library unit for the housing project, even buy a bus for community outreach."

"This is a place where we feel empowered to take the risk and responsibility that comes with improving classroom learning," she adds. "We're not afraid to ask for new resources or improvements in technology, or curriculum changes."

"We have the staff, technology, and know-how, to make the best school possible for these children," says Wooten, "and they deserve it."

—Anita Merina

First grade teacher Donna Henderson and student Sharkeeya Hood tap into technology.

"I may not need it now... but it's great to know it's there!"

The NEA Line of Credit®

- Up to $25,000 cash when you need it
- Introductory 9.9% Annual Percentage Rate (APR)*
- No cost 'til you use it

Access your NEA Line of Credit anytime, simply by writing a check. Pay off higher interest debts with a *low APR*. No application fee. No annual fee. No collateral required. For more information use this coupon, or call today **1-800-468-7632.**

nea Member Benefits

MBNA AMERICA
Member FDIC

*The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is 16.65% for other charges; 9.9% APR for cash advances through your first six statement closing dates commencing on the month after your account is opened and thereafter the rate will be 16.65% and will apply to new and outstanding cash advance balances. There is no grace period on the NEA Line of Credit. There is no annual fee. Over credit limit fee: $10. Late payment fee: $10. Minimum monthly payment is $15.

The NEA Line of Credit may not be used to pay off or pay down any MBNA America® accounts.

This account is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A.

©1995 MBNA America Bank, N.A.

☐ **Yes,** send me an application for the NEA Line of Credit.®

Please complete the information below and return the coupon to NEA Member Benefits, P.O. Box 721, Oakland, MD 21550-9972, or call 1-800-468-7632 and apply over the phone.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Is this a new address? ☐ Yes ☐ No

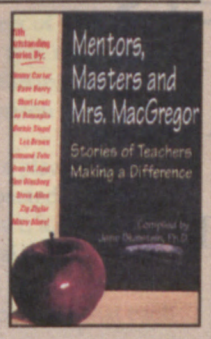
Social Security Number _____ - ____ - _____

TLC115

RESOURCES

Free or Inexpensive

GENERAL INTEREST

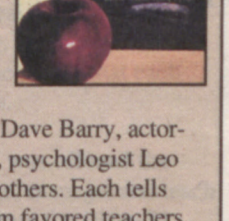


Mentors, Masters, and Mrs. MacGregor. Stories of Teachers Making a Difference. Jane Bluestein, ed. NEA President Keith Geiger and former NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell are in this book, as are off-beat humorist and syndicated columnist Dave Barry, actor-musician Steve Allen, psychologist Leo Buscaglia, and many others. Each tells what they learned from favored teachers. Mixed in: a collection of comments from school kids about what it takes to make a great teacher. Health Communications. $11.95 plus s&h: $4 for first copy and $.75 for each additional copy, 800/441-5569.

NUTRITION

The Center for Science in the Public Interest offers a nutrition curriculum kit designed to improve the eating habits of kids, from seventh grade through high school. The kit includes a 72-page booklet with 10 lessons, a poster, and a 26-minute award-winning video about eating and exercise. To order the kit, send $25 (s&h included) to CSPI—Chow Curriculum, Suite 300, 1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

OUTREACH



Why Public Schools? Here's a handy 16-page pamphlet that explains in straightforward terms why public schools are necessary in a democracy and how we can help build support for our public education system. Available only in boxes of 250 copies, $35 per box. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06515-9904, 800/229-4200.

ASTHMA EDUCATION

Free education materials, including "Asthma Awareness Curriculum for the Elementary Classroom," separate materials for grades K-3 and 4-6 (pub #2894), "Making a Difference: Asthma Management in School," a 13-minute video for teacher in-service use (pub #55-643), "Asthma and Physical Activity in the School," a booklet for physical education teachers and activity monitors (pub #2651), "Managing Asthma: A Guide for Schools," a management primer for all school staff (pub #2650), and a poster portraying three well-known athletes with asthma (pub #55-504). All materials are free. Orders of 10 or more copies will be charged $10 s&h. To order by FAX or mail, send your name, title, school, address, and telephone number to: NHLBI Infomation Center, Code AS-NEA, P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824. FAX 301/251-1223. Be sure to specify title and pub number.

GEOGRAPHY

1995 Geography Awareness Week (November 12-18) teacher's packet based on the theme "Geography: Passport to the World." Packet has posters, reproducible maps, and a teacher's handbook with lessons, activities, intriguing facts, and resources. For more information about how you can order a Geography Awareness Week teacher's packet, call 202/775-6577.

CURRENT EVENTS

Some 700,000 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders will keep up with the news through *TIME for Kids*, new this school year. Each 8-page issue comes with a 4-page teacher's guide, lesson plans, and suggestions for related science, math, and social studies activities. Charter subscriptions are $2.95 per student. To order, call 800/777-8600.

This feature is included as a service to readers. Items listed are selected by the editors at their discretion from review copies submitted by publishers.

FEEL RIGHT AT

HOME
WITH YOUR
NEA HOMEOWNERS

Enjoy new MEMBER-ONLY benefits with the NEA Homeowners Insurance Program:

- coverage for loss of school fund-raising cash or goods held by an NEA member,
- computer equipment coverage during off-premise educational activities,
- reduced deductible after four loss-free years, and
- increased business property coverage on member's insured premises.

To receive more information about these and other special benefits of the NEA Homeowners Insurance Program, call your Horace Mann agent or the toll-free service line, 1-800-999-1030 and press "4", 7 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. Central Time.

This program is not available in every state. Please check with your state association for details.

nea Member Benefits

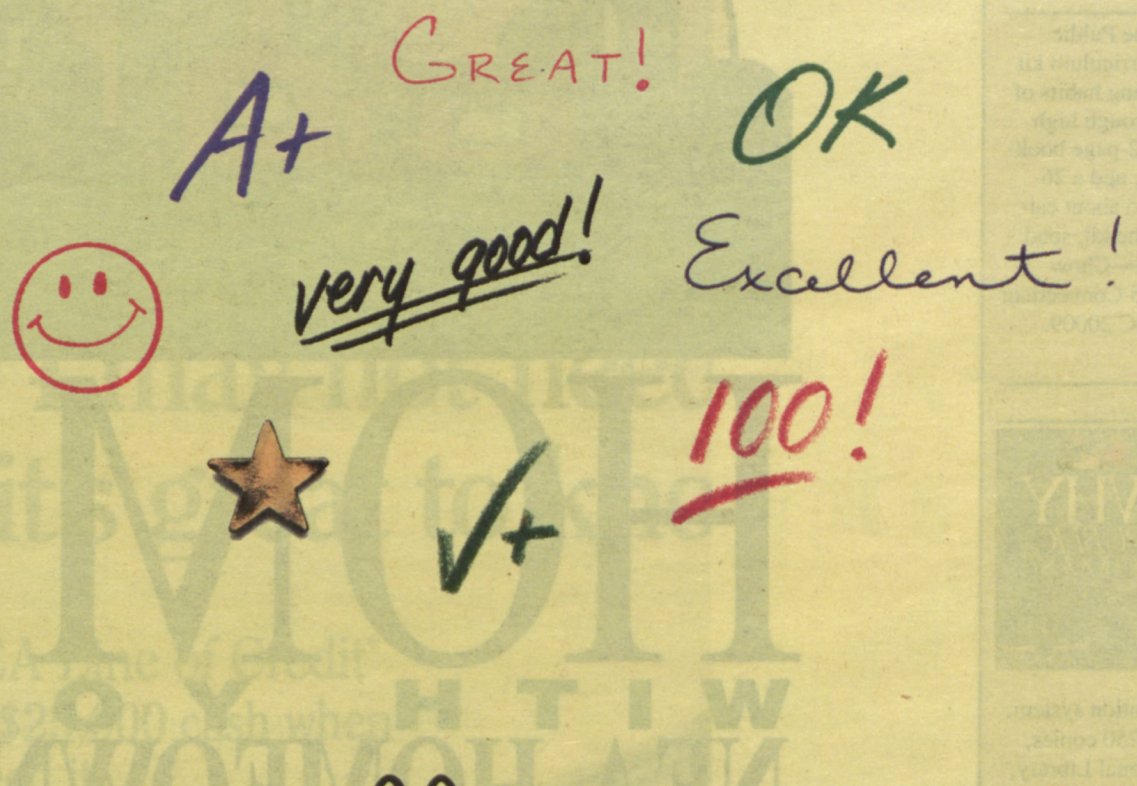
Horace Mann®
Insuring America's Educational Community

Underwritten by
Horace Mann Insurance Company
Teachers Insurance Company

THO115

We offer our sincerest appreciation to 36 teachers for their relentless dedication, unwavering patience and continual inspiration.

{ *Or, in other words:* }



THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY AND McDONALD'S PRESENT THE AMERICAN TEACHER AWARDS.

They are the top of their class. The kind of teachers who inspired you to become one. Please join us on Wednesday, November 1, at 7 pm ET/PT for the sixth annual American Teacher Awards as we honor a select group of your colleagues. It's part of our special one-day free preview during The Disney Channel's Day-Long Salute To Teachers. And our way of thanking all of you for the special mark you leave on our children.

The Disney Channel

Preview available in participating cable systems only. Some restrictions may apply.

© Disney

SoundOff

ON THE INSIDE LOOKING OUT

What does education mean for students who'll never leave their classroom? A Delaware teacher explains.

By Gina Davis

To get to my classroom, I walk through four sets of locked gates. My classroom is in the maximum security building at Sussex Correctional Institution, a small prison in rural Delaware.

This prison is not a place where I would have ever expected to make my career. But it is, in fact, a setting that has taught me a great deal about myself and my love of teaching, the depth of the human spirit, and the power that each individual possesses.

Five years ago, I was offered the opportunity to design, manage, and teach an educational program for 18- to 21-year-old incarcerated men with special education needs. I accepted the offer without reservation, little knowing the impact it would have upon my life.

For the first year and a half, I taught some men to read and taught others math and grammar.

Few of the younger inmates attended classes. I guessed that they'd had difficulties with school in the past, difficulties that left them with a bad taste for school and the formal education process.

I debated whether to chase them down and nag them to attend classes or allow them to make the decisions that their adult status gives them. Usually, I did make a concerted effort to get them to attend class. But I respected their decision—even when it was to avoid school.

Over the years, I've become convinced that when the time is right and the right attitude is there, incarcerated adults are the hungriest of learners.

Take John Lamborn, for example.

Ten years ago, after already serving 10 years of a life sentence, John made a conscious and dedicated decision to improve his education and turn his life around. He's now the only man incarcerated in Delaware who studied for and received a GED while serving time in solitary confinement.

John currently works with me, tutoring other inmates in math and tutoring a college-level computer class he organized that's taken by five staff members and 13 inmates.

Richard Massey is an inmate who had a great deal of difficulty adapting to his life sentence—and had a history of escape attempts to prove it.

After serving 18 years, Richard became one of my first math students. He had a strong will and a disciplined dedication to mastering math.

Richard completed the work he needed to meet graduation requirements just as eight new students entered the high school classes. I asked him to help me tutor these students. He agreed.

As a direct result of Richard's participation, 30 men graduated that year, compared with only 12 the year before.

At the graduation ceremony, I spoke in front of a large group for the first time in my life. I acknowledged the effort and spirit of my tutors. Family, friends, and graduates stood in tribute to them.

Because I value the work that Richard did for me, I asked the people at my church to support him for a college class—math, of course, since he's taken to the subject like a drowning man grabbing for a life-preserver.

In a note of thanks to the congregation, Richard acknowledged that making a connection with me contributed to major changes in his attitude and life. But, mostly, he credited education and the purpose that tutoring gives to his days.

Since my first days of teaching at the prison, I've grown bolder in my efforts to expand educational opportunities for the inmates I teach.

I've joined a group of prison officials, inmates, advocates, and educators who are working to improve the literacy level of incarcerated individuals. Through participation in that group, I've been invited to "ask away"—and I have, with a great deal of success.

I've asked that minimum and medium security inmates be allowed to mix with maximum security inmates for educational purposes.

I've asked to teach in a deserted room on the second floor of the maximum security building, since it was more conducive to education than the assorted chow halls where I'd previously taught.

And I've asked that inmates be allowed to teach and supervise other inmates. Permission was granted, and inmates like John and Richard were allowed to become tutors.

Two years ago, I asked that John, Richard, and a third tutor be allowed to join the literacy group. That request was initially denied because of the length of their sentences. Since then, the third tutor has been executed. But John and Richard were both allowed to join. To attend meetings, they were permitted to leave the physical confinement of the prison for the first time in many years.

Over the years, I've also worked hard to convince local community college officials to offer college classes at the prison. Last fall, for the first time, I taught basic composition and business math classes two nights a week in my prison classroom.

Some of the students dropped out. The work was difficult, and they were poorly prepared for the discipline the classes demanded. But those who passed are now helping me teach a college prep class. Twenty-five inmates with high school diplomas come and study hard so they'll be prepared to succeed in community college classes.

Unfortunately, future inmates may not have the opportunity to take college classes. As a result of the recently enacted crime bill, incarcerated adults are no longer eligible for federal financial aid in the form of Pell grants.

I know and understand the gut-level public sentiment that federal tax dollars shouldn't be used to pay for an inmate's college education. But research shows that the only thing that significantly reduces recidivism is education. The higher the level of education that inmates achieve while incarcerated, the less likely they are to return to prison after being released.

From my experience, education provides incarcerated individuals with their first taste of success. It is a great lesson and a powerful experience.

I sit in my classroom each day, teaching a small skill or checking a student's work. I often look up from my desk to observe what's taking place around me. The din I hear sometimes seems loud, but the noise is welcome. It's the sound of teaching and learning occurring before me, around me, and in spite of me.

The classroom is full this year. There's often not an empty seat in the room, yet, miraculously, we always seem to find a place when a new student comes through the door.

Gina Davis was recently named one of nine national Correctional Educators of the Year. She can be reached at ginad@aol.com or *ginad@shore.intercom.net.*

CHRISTMAS SEALS

Are You Teaching A Rembrandt?

If one of your students enters the annual Christmas Seals Kids' Drawing Contest and wins big, you win $1,000.

The call is out to all budding artists, between the ages of six and 15, to enter the annual Christmas Seals Kids' Drawing Contest.

Hand-drawn designs that illustrate this year's theme, "Feeling Good at the Holidays," will be accepted through March 31, 1996.

The contest is sponsored by the American Lung Association, the Triaminic Parents Club, and the National Education Association Health Information Network.

The Christmas Seals Kids' Drawing Contest is a good classroom art activity to celebrate the spirit of the holiday season.

Last year's contest was launched at NEA headquarters in Washington, D.C., where Shari Lewis and Lamb Chop accepted the first entries from a group of public school students in Prince William County, Virginia.

The contest kickoff celebrated the opening of "A History of Helping: Christmas Seals 1907-1993," an exhibition of the 52 winning designs from the 1993 Kids' Drawing Contest and selected historical American Lung Association seals.

Fifty-nine percent of last year's entries were from schools, and more than $60,000 was raised for the millions of children afflicted with lung disease.

"We were overwhelmed by the huge number of entries received in 1994 from school children participating through this program," notes Jim Williams, director of NEA's Health Information Network.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for students to engage in a colorful, creative activity—and help their peers suffering from lung disease."

This year, for every entry received, the Triaminic Parents Club will donate one dollar to the American Lung Association. And, if a student creates the grand prize winning entry with a drawing created as part of a classroom activity, the winner's teacher will receive a $1,000 grant for classroom use.

In March 1996, winners will be chosen from each state and the District of Columbia.

One winner will also be selected from Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, or from a military family living abroad. These winners will receive a "My First Sony" electronic sketch pad.

Each winner's drawing will be entered into a final round of judging to select a grand prize winner. The grand prize winner will win a multimedia computer.

The winning Christmas Seals will be mailed to more than 60 million people across the country as an official part of the 1996 Christmas Seals Campaign.

To enter, teachers can use the form that appears in the accompanying ad on this page (elementary editions only) or call 800/LUNG-USA.

Forms will also be available in the December issue of *Women's Day* magazine and in doctors' offices throughout the nation. Once again, the deadline for entries is March 31, 1996.

Looking for insight to help your school become more inclusive?

NEA member Harry Klugel—a resource specialist in Maryland—recommends *Toward Inclusive Classrooms*, the best-selling new title from the NEA Professional Library's Teacher-to-Teacher Books.

TEAMING UP FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL SUCCE
toward
INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS
More and more teachers are striving to create classroom environments in which all children can succeed.

"Nearly every page in this book gave me a useful inclusion idea. It's not a 'know-it-all' approach. All NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books are written by teachers for teachers, so you get practitioner insights and experiences—not theory, reality!"

"Need a quick way to find practical information to help you cope with state-mandated inclusion? Start with this book. The reproducibles, sample assessment forms, and glossary will help you communicate effectively with parents. In my school we've also adapted the forms to help keep our team on track."

***"Toward Inclusive Classrooms* has a really great concept: teachers teaming up to provide the degree of inclusion appropriate to their circumstances, while focusing on what a student can do rather than what he or she can't do. Here we teach kids how to be advocates for themselves. It's great when they know they can go to the teacher and discuss accommodations that allow them to do their best.**

—Harry Klugel

Toward Inclusive Classrooms
NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books
96pp. 1994. (2903-8-00-U3)
Price: $9.95

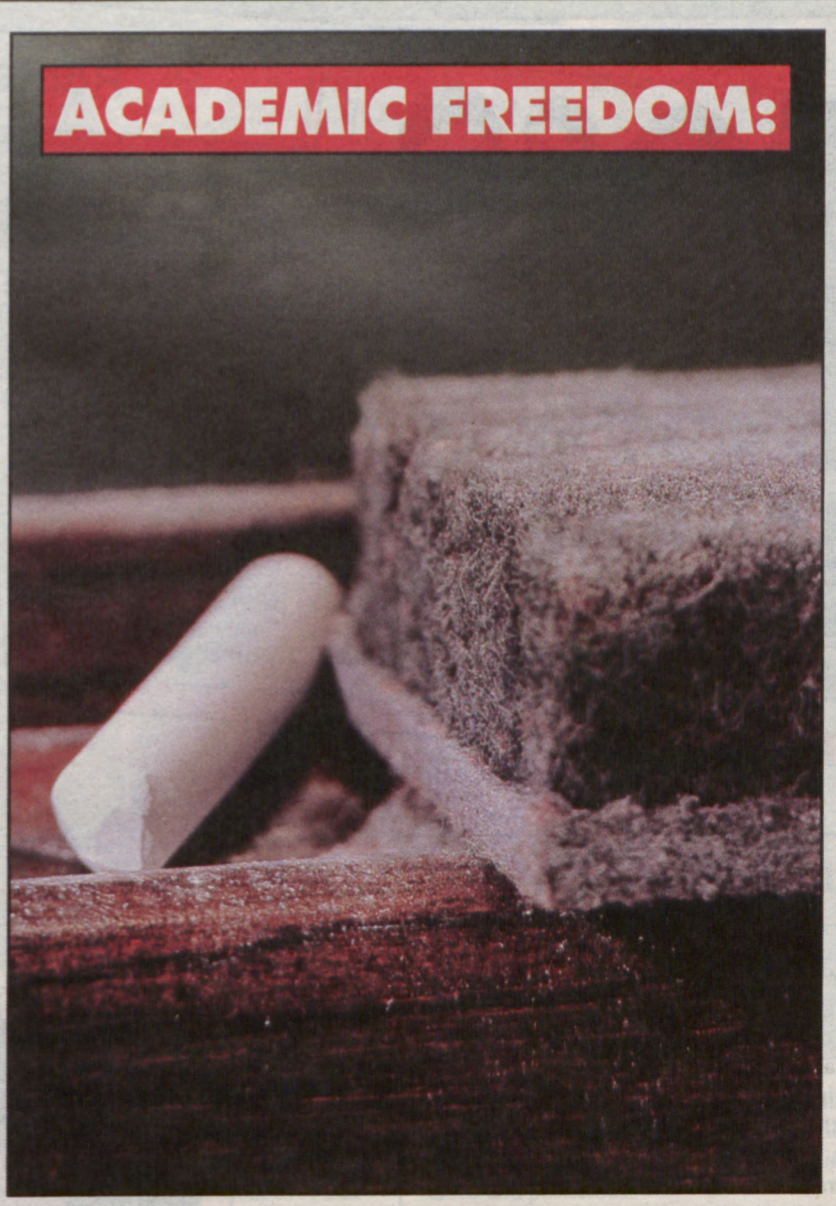
Ordering Information
Use the stock number above to speed your order. Shipping and handling will be added to all orders. Include CA or DC sales tax if applicable.

Order Toll-Free
1-800-229-4200

or mail to NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516

Legal

ACADEMIC FREEDOM: Myth Or Reality?



Do high school teachers have a right to academic freedom? The answer might surprise you.

By all accounts, NEA member Cissy Lacks was a great high school English teacher. But her St. Louis-area school board fired the 21-year veteran last March. Her crime? Letting students write and perform skits about life in the inner city—skits about sex, drugs, and violence that included coarse street language and profanity.

With funding from NEA and Missouri-NEA, Lacks recently sued, claiming her academic freedom rights were violated.

She argues that in order to get her students to start writing, she utilized the "student-centered teaching method," a teaching technique that allows students initially to express themselves without censorship or criticism.

"If I censor that first work," Lacks explains, "then I don't get to that last good one."

Will she win her lawsuit? It's hard to say. While the U.S. Supreme Court has long given lip service to the concept of academic freedom, it has never squarely held that the First Amendment guarantees a teacher's right to determine what or how to teach.

There's some great language from several older cases. In 1967, the Court said, "Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, which is of transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teachers concerned." In the 1982 decision, *Island Trees School District v. Pico*, the Court held that school officials cannot censor library books and other curriculum materials simply because they "disagree" with and seek to "suppress ideas."

More recently though, the Court has made clear that schools can ban or punish in-class speech that is "biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences."

How do these broad principles play out when teachers take their academic freedom claims to court? For fans of free speech, the results are not encouraging.

In one significant NEA-funded case from 1987, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals held that it was not a violation of the First Amendment for a Kentucky school board to fire veteran teacher Jackie Fowler for showing her high school students the R-rated movie *Pink Floyd—The Wall*.

The film's message is that overly rigid and authoritarian parents, teachers, and judges create disturbed individuals. The movie also contains vulgar language and sexually-explicit material.

The three judges on the Sixth Circuit panel each wrote a different opinion. One said that her firing was unconstitutional because it was based on the board members' disagreement with the movie's anti-establishment theme, i.e., the "ideas" expressed by the film.

The second judge held that the termination was okay because the board simply felt vulgarity and nudity were not suitable for teenagers. The third said that it wasn't a First Amendment case, reasoning that since Fowler showed the movie as "entertainment" on the last day of classes and did not teach about the film, she had no academic freedom claim.

In a more recent case, Indiana teacher and NEA member Roger Landry literally took a page from the movie *Dead Poets Society* and removed the glossaries from 146 science textbooks. As he later explained, Landry wanted his students to learn the meanings of words from the context, not the glossary.

Rejecting Landry's academic freedom claim, the Indiana Court of Appeals upheld a two-day suspension without pay. The court reasoned that Landry wasn't punished for the "expression" of "ideas," but for damaging school property, which is a crime in Indiana.

Several older cases found First Amendment violations where school administrators sought to suppress classroom expression.

In *Kingsville Independent School District v. Cooper*, for example, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals held that a Texas school board improperly fired an NEA member in 1972 for using a role-playing technique to teach about race relations in the post-Civil War Reconstruction period. The teacher had been told "not to discuss Blacks in American history."

But more recent cases make clear that, so long as they're not attempting to censor "ideas," school officials—and not teachers—have the final authority to determine course content, the curriculum, reading lists, teaching methods, homework loads, and even student grades.

That doesn't mean, however, that a teacher can be punished anytime he or she discusses a subject in class that the administration later decides is inappropriate. An important corollary to the right to academic freedom is the requirement that teachers be put on prior notice that their course material or teaching technique isn't approved.

NEA member Ed Stachura was fired after a group of conservative parents protested his use of a certain textbook and two films in teaching human reproduction to a Michigan middle school life science class. Problem was, the administration had specifically approved the controversial curriculum materials. In a 1985 decision, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals had little trouble holding that the school board violated Stachura's right to academic freedom.

Because the courts have not been very receptive to teachers' academic freedom claims based on the First Amendment, creative lawyers have looked to other sources for legal protection. Chief among these are collective bargaining agreements.

A number of NEA local affiliates have negotiated agreements that include clauses specifically recognizing teachers' right to academic freedom.

In two important decisions involving NEA locals from Hawaii (1976) and Delaware (1989), arbitrators relied on such clauses to strike down school district policies prohibiting teachers from showing R-rated movies in class.

So is Cissy Lacks going to win her case? Maybe.

Among other things, she's claiming that she has used the "student-centered teaching method" for the 21 years she taught in the district and was never put on notice that this teaching method was taboo. She's also arguing that the school board doesn't have "good cause" to fire her under the Missouri tenure law.

And she even has a racial discrimination claim. Lacks is one of the few white teachers in an all-Black school, and she alleges that several Black teachers engaged in similar conduct without being punished.

The case is scheduled to go to trial on November 4, 1996.

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

People

Rachelle Omensen

Roots and Wings

"Parenting is something I do well," **Cindy Peck** says simply. Being a single super-mom of nine adopted kids, this English teacher from Summit, New Jersey, hasn't time to mince words.

Her children are Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Native American, the first adoped in 1977. "I found that raising a child transethnically and transracially requires extra parenting skills," says Peck, "so I started a group for parents of Korean children. Then I created the magazine *Roots and Wings*."

In the quarterly, which enjoys 5,000 subscribers, Peck deals with across-the-board adoption issues, hoping to dispel the "secrecy and shame" surrounding the subject.

For Peck (whose e-mail address is RootsWings@aol.com), the biggest challenge isn't deadlines, or even discipline. It's "making ends meet on a teacher's salary."

Winning Route for Lemon Aid

Since when do mechanics make house calls, much less travel 6,000 miles to repair a car? Since last June,when Hawaii vocational education teacher **Kyle Sera** (right) and two students flew over land and sea to fix up a lemon—all in the spirit of competition, not automotive compassion.

Sera, along with Chris Olsten (center) and another student from Maui High School, grabbed first prize at the National Quality Care Challenge in Washington, D.C.

The competition included a written test of the kids' auto knowledge and a practical test in which the students fixed a deliberately damaged car.

To qualify for the national competition, Sera and his students first won titles at regional and state contests. Then they made the long journey to the nation's capital—with rest stops in Disneyland and Las Vegas.

"It certainly was a long road," says Sera, a 19-year teaching veteran. "But it was a fun and rewarding trip." **Dennis Ishii** (left), who also teaches at Maui High in Kahului, came along for the ride, paying for the trip from his own pocket.

This year's winning team has graduated. But Sera is excited at the prospect of breaking in a new team. "The fun of it is working with the kids and watching them improve their skills," he says.

Ray Tanaka

David Carson

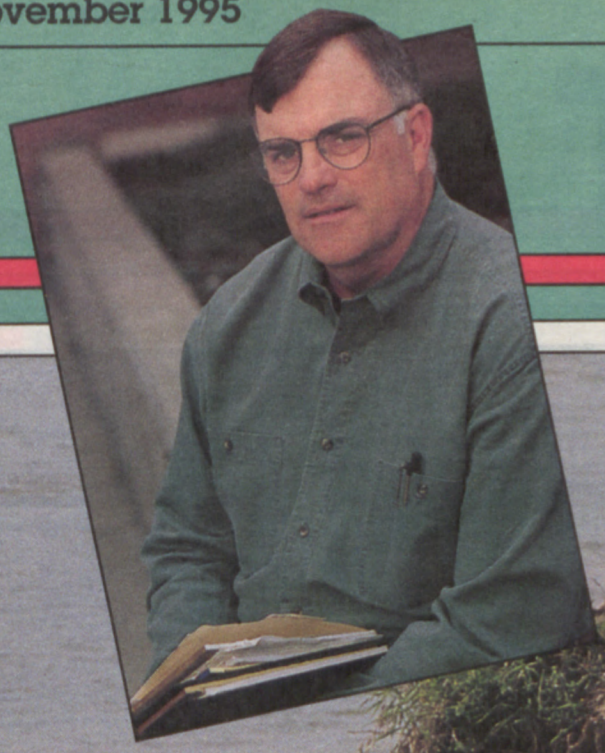
A Director's Debut

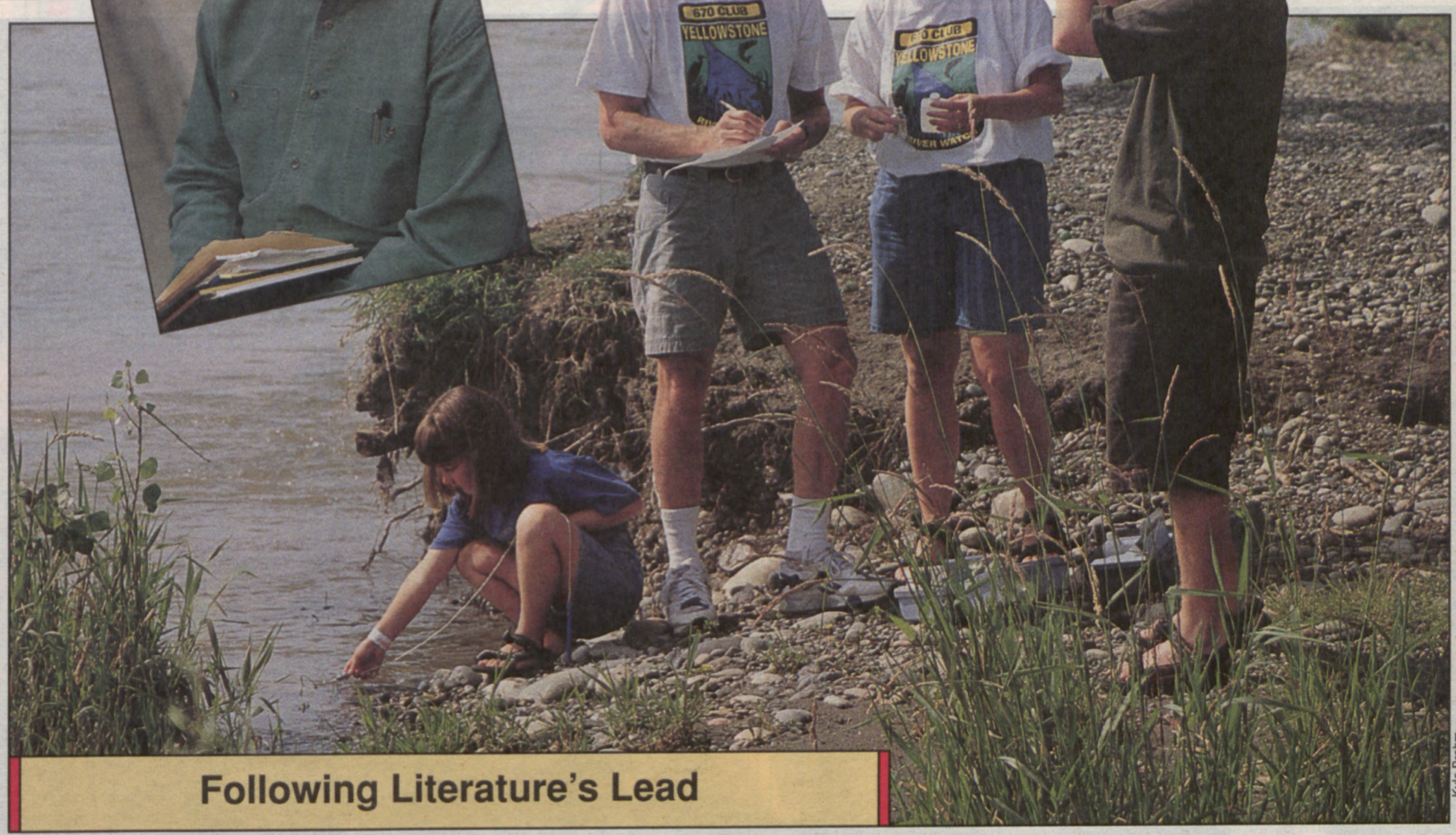
As an actor, school secretary **Melanie Donegan** has played Madame Tsiang in the *King and I*, Mrs. Paroo in *The Music Man*, and the captain's daughter in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. But it's as director of the Wachusetts Regional High School play *The Facts of Life* that Donegan has really made her mark.

The play—five skits about AIDS, with an introduction and closing by Donegan—includes frank dialogue about sexuality and mortality. "People really got into the story," says Donegan. "You could have heard a pin drop when it was performed."

Afterward, students at the Holden, Massachusetts, school started an AIDS awareness club. With Donegan as the club's adviser, the group organized a dance-a-thon, raising a total of $6,000.

"Participating in theater lets me get away from myself and be someone else," says Donegan. "And I love working with kids. There's a thrill in helping them do a job well—either on or off the stage."





Kyle Brehm

Following Literature's Lead

Some folks might be surprised to find high school literature students researching sulfur dioxide emissions and monitoring water quality, but it's all perfectly logical to Billings, Montana English teacher **Mike Patrick** (inset) and his students.

"We read Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*," says Patrick. "One of its messages is that we all have an obligation to be informed about our environment so we can make appropriate decisions."

In Billings, home of three oil refineries, the biggest environmental issue is sulfur dioxide. So when the Environmental Protection Agency announced last winter that Billings had the worst annual concentration of sulfur dioxide out of the 476 sites studied, Patrick's students dove in.

First, they gathered information. Joining forces with science teacher **John Miller** (above) and his class, they monitored the quality of the water in Yellowstone River. The students found the water quality fair at best—due primarily to the use of herbicides and pesticides.

They organized the data, analyzed it, and attempted to come up with a solution. They then talked with representatives from all three companies and the EPA.

"Heeding Rachel Carson's advice to know what's out there, then tell others, they wrote letters to newspapers and legislators," says Patrick.

"The kids learned many things—not the least of which was how industrial lobbies work," he adds. They're now waiting to see if the state will pass stricter air quality standards.

Doug Benedict

They Thought They Could

It's a high-tech expansion of *The Little Engine That Could*, this story of Pennsylvania teacher **Winnifred Bolinsky** and her fifth grade students.

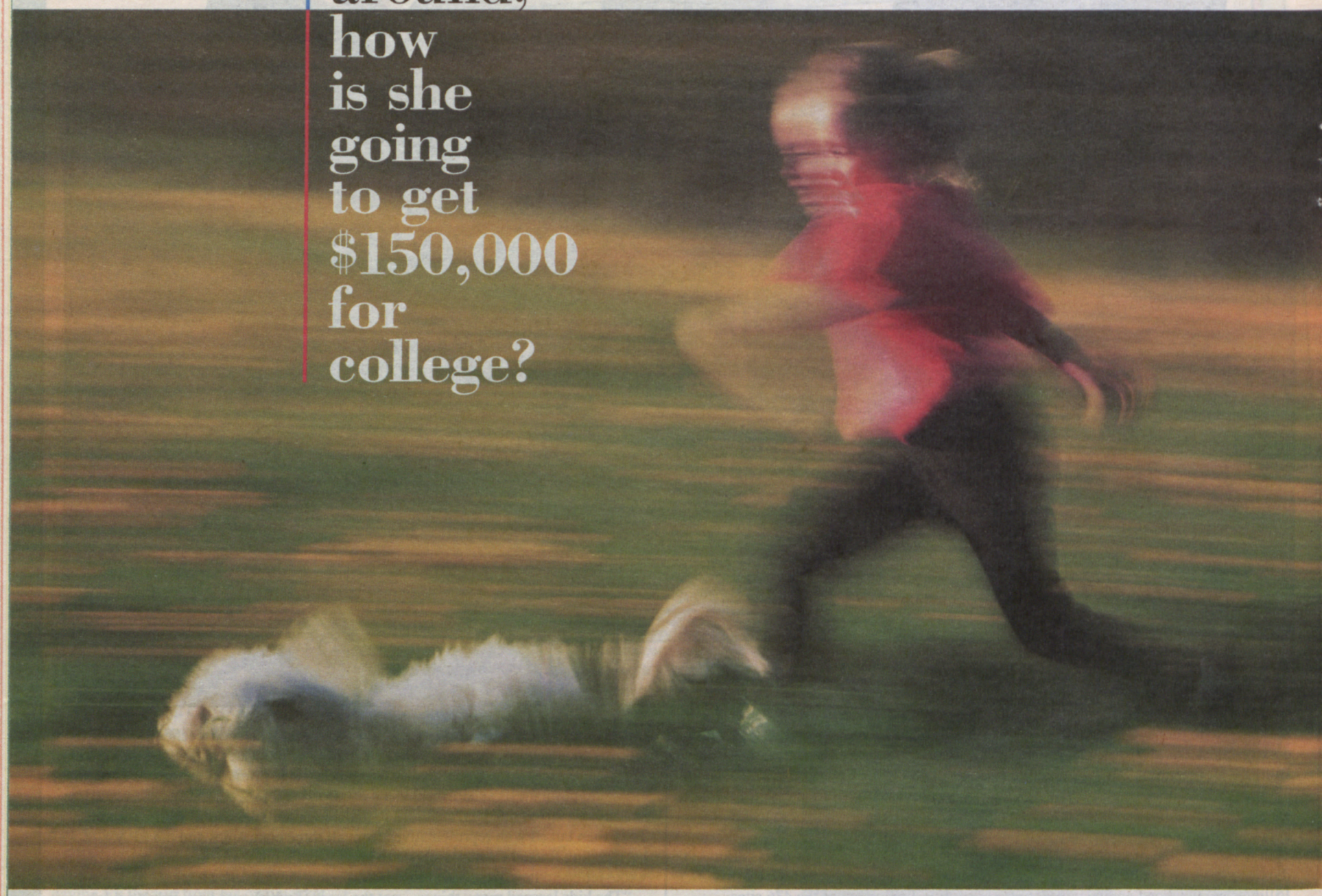
Their challenge: create a railroad. The tools: imagination, research skills, and modern technology. By the time they were finished, Bolinsky and her students had created the Fogelsville (Elementary School) Transcontent Railroad, and Bolinsky had won *Technology and Learning Magazine*'s Teacher of the Year award.

Bolinsky's students interviewed local railroad workers, collected data on steam engines and railroads nationwide, and used their classroom computers to design and build their own railroad system.

"This project—named the Transcontent Railroad because of its integration of learning skills—was a labor of love and creativity," says Bolinsky. "My students learned that anything is possible."

To prove the point, Bolinsky's students went on to use a video microscope to examine the inner workings of one of their classroom computers—and then built their own.

If you're not around, how is she going to get $150,000 for college?



Chances are, you took out life insurance to protect your child's future. If so, then you'll want to know this.

For today's seven-year old, four years at a private college will cost $150,253.* The culprit? Inflation. It's inescapable. But not insurmountable.

You can economically *supplement* your life insurance with the NEA Home Protection Plan†. It's a decreasing term life insurance plan your family can use to help pay for expenses like college tuition or a mortgage. That way, your family can use your primary insurance to help maintain their standard of living.

While inflation can rob you of future buying power, it doesn't have to rob your child of a future college education.

*The College Board 1993–1994 survey

NEA Members Insurance Trust*

nea Member Benefits

Underwritten by The Prudential
The Prudential Insurance Company of America. Licensed in all states. Principal offices in Newark, New Jersey 07102-3777

NEA Home Protection

For the times you need life insurance most

For a free quote, call: **1-800-637-4636**
Mon-Fri, 8 am to 8 pm; or Sat, 9 am to 1 pm (ET).

Contract Form Number 83500 COV 1004
THP115

The Prudential Insurance Company of America. Licensed in all states. Principal offices in Newark, New Jersey 07102-3777.

†This NEA Home Protection Insurance Plan has certain limitations and exclusions. For costs and complete details of the coverage, please call 1-800-637-4636.

Trends

Read Any Good Books Lately?

Judging from recent stats on TV viewing, an appalling number of Americans would have to answer no. Adults spend more than a day a week glued to the tube.

KIDS (Aged 2-11)	21 hours, 59 minutes
TEENS (Aged 12-17)	21 hours, 58 minutes
MEN (Aged 18+)	28 hours, 48 minutes
WOMEN (Aged 18+)	32 hours, 48 minutes

Choice Tidbits

Almost a fifth of the 59 million children in grades 3-12 attended a school other than their assigned public school in 1993.

Some 6.5 million percent chose another public school. The top reasons: academic environment (26 percent), special academic courses (23 percent), and school convenience (23 percent). Black students (23 percent) were more likely than white students (19 percent) to attend a "chosen" school. Students from families with annual incomes over $50,000 were more likely to participate in school choice.

But what does it all *mean*?

A book commissioned by the Harvard University Graduate School of Education concludes, "It is unlikely that choice will do anything other than simply move high achievers . . . from one school to another, mistaking the effect of concentrating strong and motivated students for an effect of the school or the choice system."

The book, *School Choice: The Cultural Logic of Families, The Political Rationality of Institutions*, will be published this month by Teachers College at Columbia University.

Power to the Fat Cat

In a recent Time-CNN survey, 38 percent of those polled view unions unfavorably. Wonder what they think about these numbers.

In 1992, the average CEO earned 157 times what the average factory worker made. Between 1980 and 1993, CEO pay shot up 514 percent, corporate profits soared 166 percent—while worker's wages grew only 68 percent.

Forty-four percent of those polled like labor unions, and 68 percent believe that labor unions are still needed. Yet only 10 percent belong to a union.

It Lacks Drama, But . . .

Ever had one of those days where students swell with gratitude and demonstrate that, yes, they did get the message after all?

If they're too few and far between, take solace in a recent poll of high school students by the Department of Education. Seventy-eight percent thought their teachers graded fairly, 82 percent felt their teachers were interested in students, and 85 percent thought their teachers were just plain good. Not the stuff movies are made of, but a solid endorsement of a job well done.

The Whack Is Back

Alabama legislators brought the issue of corporal punishment back to the front page recently when they passed a law that protects teachers who spank their students from liability. Twenty-seven states still ban corporal punishment in school. But even those who strongly oppose paddling agree that the tide may be turning against them.

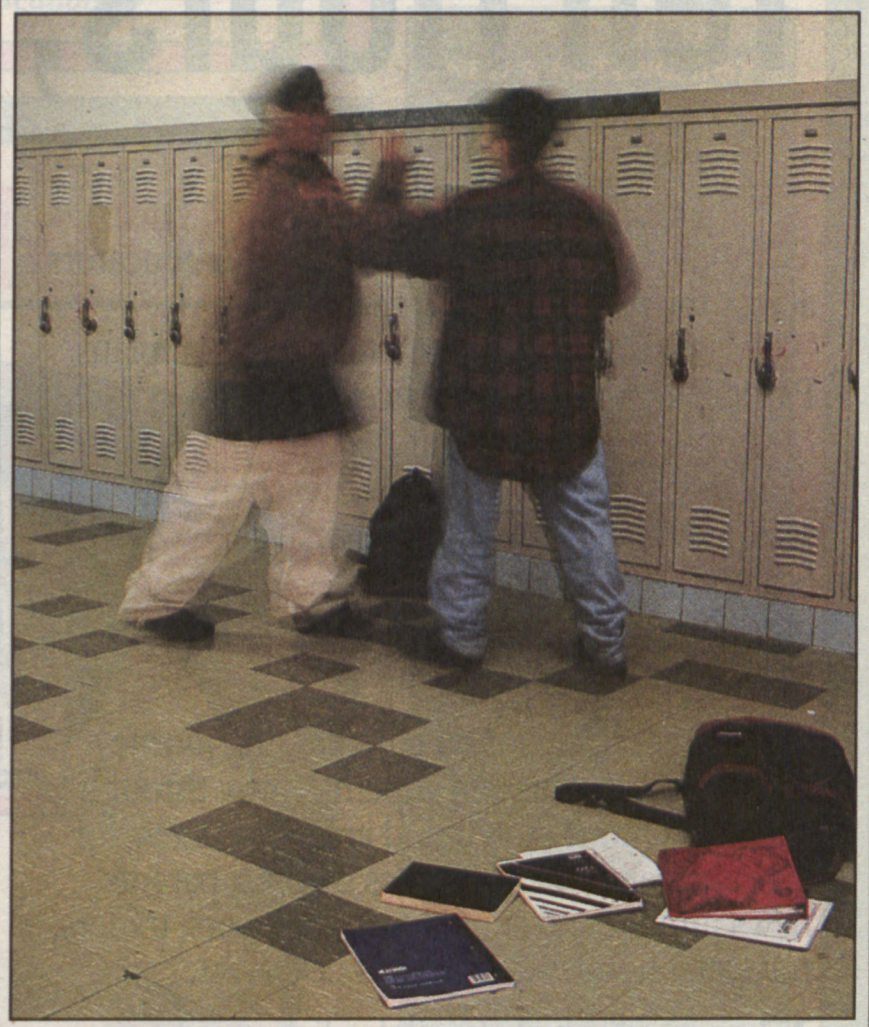
Below are the number of paddlings that were reported in 1992.

Alabama	53,443	Louisiana	41,673
Arizona	*895	Mississippi	52,289
Arkansas	50,773	Missouri	*15,608
Colorado	*38	New Mexico	3,960
Delaware	398	North Carolina	13,188
District of Columbia	2	Ohio	9,356
Florida	*26,619	Oklahoma	19,184
Georgia	47,946	Pennsylvania**	
Idaho	*65	South Carolina	11,660
Indiana	8,756	Tennessee	50,959
Kansas	*213	Texas	140,928
Kentucky	*673	Wyoming	32

*Denotes statistical uncertainty.

** Figures for Pennsylvania were not available.

Source: U.S. Department of Education



Chilling. That's the only way to describe some of the findings from this year's Gallup Youth Survey. Twenty-eight percent of the students polled say they know of peers with guns and knives in school. No wonder 25 percent say they regularly fear for their safety in school. Also, 46 percent say drinking's a problem with their peers. Fifty-nine percent know someone who tried to commit suicide—and 26 percent know someone who succeeded.

No More Poor Excuses

Those who think cutting aid to the poor will fix America's financial woes should realize we're not that generous now.

Spending on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps, and Medicaid for AFDC recipients *combined* came to only 3 percent of federal spending in 1994, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

As for the states, those with higher welfare benefits, like California, have the lowest birthrates for unmarried teens. Tight-fisted states like Georgia have high teen pregnancy rates. Even so, pregnant teens don't run rampant through the welfare system—of the 3.8 million mothers on AFDC, only 32,000 are unwed mothers under 17.

Malaise International

The international brotherhood of man is suffering a family crisis.

Americans are by no means alone in enduring problems like divorce, unwed motherhood, and the feminization of poverty. According to a study released by the Population Council, a New York-based non-profit group:

➤ In many developed countries, divorce rates doubled between 1970 and 1990. In less developed countries, some 25 percent of first marriages end by the time women reach their forties.

➤ Out-of-wedlock births are up almost everywhere. As many as one-third of Northern European babies are born out of wedlock.

➤ Deadbeat dads are everywhere. In Argentina, two-thirds of divorced fathers don't pay up on child support. In Malaysia, half skip out; in Japan, 75 percent; in the United States, 40 percent.

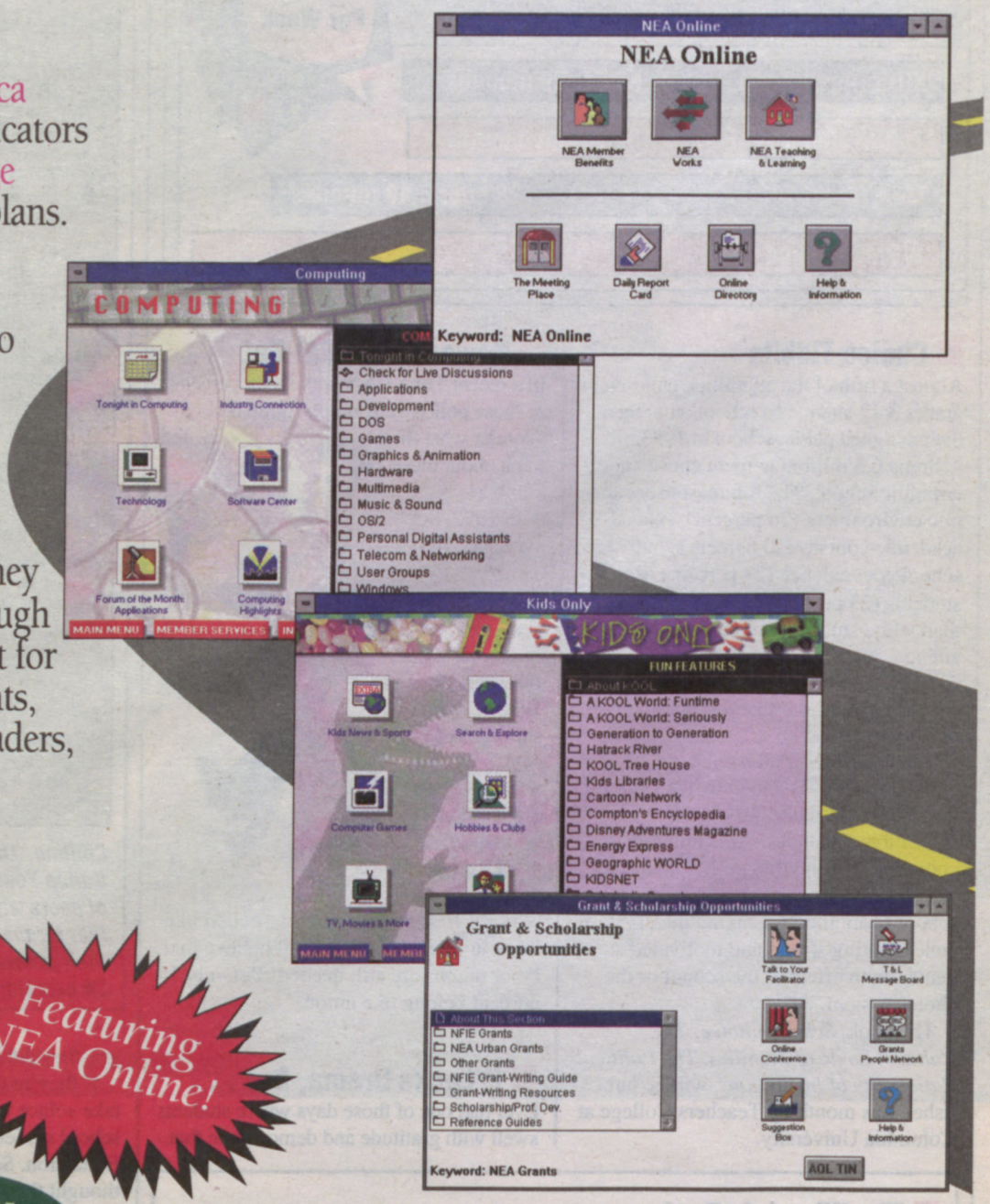
➤ Women work longer hours than men—30 percent more in less developed countries, 20 percent more in industrialized ones.

Try America Online For Ten Hours, FREE.

NEA Online ™—exclusively on America Online — puts you in touch with educators across the nation. Browse the NEA Message Boards for ideas, information, and lesson plans. Participate in live conferences in the NEA Meeting Place. Check out the Grant and Scholarship Opportunities for teachers who seek to enhance their professional skills. Search the NEA Online Directory for other NEA members online who share your interests.

Then get ready for an enlightening journey on the information superhighway through America Online. You'll find areas of interest for cyberspacers, small business owners, parents, news junkies and sports nuts, shoppers, traders, travelers, hobbyists, students...everyone!

Enjoy unlimited e-mail, leading news publications, personal finance and travel-planning resources, and more than 100,000 software files you can download easily.



Featuring NEA Online!

Complete and mail the coupon below, or fax it to 1-800-827-4595.

Yes! I'd like to try NEA Online™ and America Online® — FREE.

Send me the free software and trial membership. I understand there's no risk — if I'm not completely satisfied, I may cancel without further obligation.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

(_____)
HOME PHONE

SELECT DISK TYPE AND SIZE —

Windows*: ❑ 3.5
DOS: ❑ 3.5 ❑ 5.25 ❑ High Density ❑ Low Density
Macintosh®: ❑ 3.5

*To use America Online for Windows, you must have a 386 PC or higher, 4MB of RAM, a VGA monitor (256 color support recommended), a mouse, a modem, and a working copy of Windows 3.1.
Use of America Online requires a major credit card or checking account. Limit one free trial per household. America Online is a registered service mark of America Online, Inc. Other names are service marks or trademarks of their respective owners.
*NOTE: Users outside the 48 contiguous United States pay a 20-cent per-minute surcharge at all times, including trial time. Access from certain areas may incur long-distance telephone charges which will appear on your regular phone bill. For the access number closest to you, call SprintNet Access Center at 1-800-877-5045.

16889

Send for your FREE TEN-HOUR trial today!

Mail this coupon,
or fax it to
1-800-827-4595.
To order by phone, call

1-800-781-5577

nea Online
The Communication Network for NEA Members

AMERICA Online®

ByteSize

NEA members using technology to improve education

IN THE CLASSROOM

A School for Iqbal

When he was four years old, Iqbal Masih was sold into slavery and chained to a carpet loom for 12 hours a day. He broke free after six years and became an articulate advocate for human rights. He touched many during his U.S. visit last year. The 12-year-old also angered many back home in Pakistan—in April, he was shot and killed near his grandmother's home. Now students across the country have joined forces online to create a school in his memory.

WHO: Gary Barron, sixth grade teacher, Vista Campana Middle School, Apple Valley, California

E-MAIL ADDRESS: Baron9@aol.com

WHAT: A social studies lesson gets bolstered by an e-mail campaign, and students become leaders in an international human rights campaign.

INSPIRATION: My sixth graders had studied ancient civilizations that were established along the Indus River, which runs through Pakistan. We were also discussing the topic of slavery in ancient Greece. So when I told them the story of Iqbal, which I'd run across online, it made these discussions come to life for them.

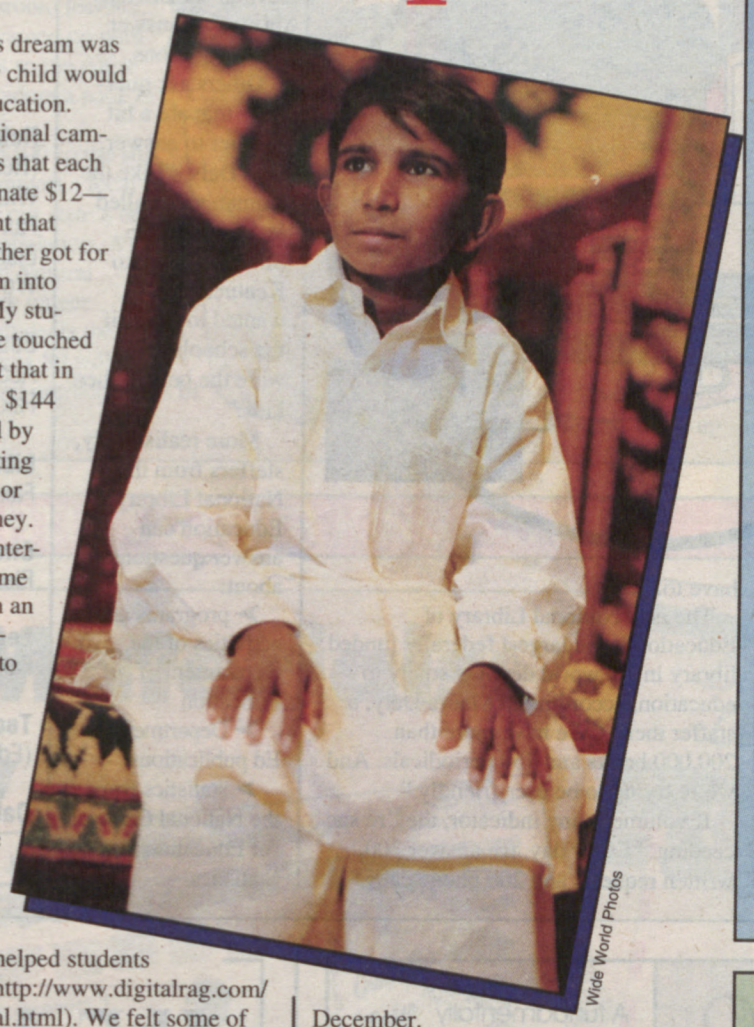
His murder made them want to take action. So they joined an online campaign started by students in Massachusetts to raise money to open a school in Iqbal's village, Muridke. Part of his dream was that every child would get an education.

The national campaign asks that each school donate $12—the amount that Iqbal's father got for selling him into slavery. My students were touched by the fact that in one week, $144 was raised by kids donating their soda or snack money.

It was interesting for me to work on an e-mail project—and to sign in the "guest book" on the project's home page that Amnesty International has helped students establish (http://www.digitalrag.com/mirror/iqbal.html). We felt some of the power that this medium can have.

On that home page is information on where other schools can send donations for the School for Iqbal Masih Fund.

To date, almost $5,000 has been raised. The campaign ends in December.



Wide World Photos

CLICK: My students were moved by the story of Iqbal. Here in a semi-rural town in the Mojave Desert, they felt closer to a distant part of the world and to a cause that should know no boundaries.

BYTES FOR BEGINNERS

Few teachers or students will experience the dilemma of surfing across explicit material, but schools should still consider adopting a set of guidelines for exploring and using the Internet. Be prepared for when (not if) a student encounters sexist, racist, or other objectionable material by writing an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Some important points to include:

➤ *Intellectual freedom.* Clearly outline your position on user access to inappropriate material. Will you filter Net access or expect users to control themselves?

➤ *Copyright issues.* Instruct users not to post or distribute copyrighted material. Your AUP should emphasize that digital matter is treated exactly the same as printed matter.

➤ *Loss or damage.* Make certain users understand that your school's Internet connection is not infallible—things will happen and your school is not liable for lost or damaged content.

➤ *Hackers.* Make clear that the school will not tolerate users harassing others, attempting to gain access to other user accounts, or using someone else's account.

➤ *Privacy.* Warn users clearly against sharing personal information. Names, addresses, and phone numbers should never be posted or e-mailed via the Net.

Check out acceptable use policies from these schools on the Internet: Jefferson County Public Schools (http://lyndon.jefferson.k12.ky.us/AUsePolicy.html); Los Angeles Unified School District (http://Lausd.k12.ca.us/aup.html); Dublin School (http://www.dublinschool.org/AcceptableUse.html).

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

LIMITED ACCESS

■ Surfwatch for Windows limits access to inappropriate material on the Internet. This new software is available in stores for $49.95 or can be ordered by e-mail from info@surf-watch.com

NEWSLETTERS

■ Check out the homepage of the Northwest Regional Lab. More than half a dozen newsletters are available—on math and science, policy issues, technology preparation, drug-free schools, and more. (http://www.nwrel.org) or (gopher.nwrel.org)

CONNECTIVITY

■ "Connecting the Nation" looks at Internet connectivity across key public institutions. The full report, released in June by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, is available at (http://www.ntia.doc.gov/connect.html) or (gopher.ntia.doc.gov--)

EDUCATION STATS

■ The National Center for Education Statistics has just released the 1995 "Condition of Education." The Commissioner's Statement and an overview of this 400-page report are now available at (http://www.ed.gov/pubs/CondOfEd_95/). See Research Clues, page 24, for related story.

RESOURCES

DONATED COMPUTERS

■ The National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources offers information on how to obtain donated computers and other supplies. For a free educator's information kit, call 800/562-0955.

E-MAIL

■ "Write Here, Write Now," a free booklet that helps students learn to use e-mail, is available from MCI. The booklet also includes activities kids can participate in. Teachers can get the booklet by calling 800/726-8470.

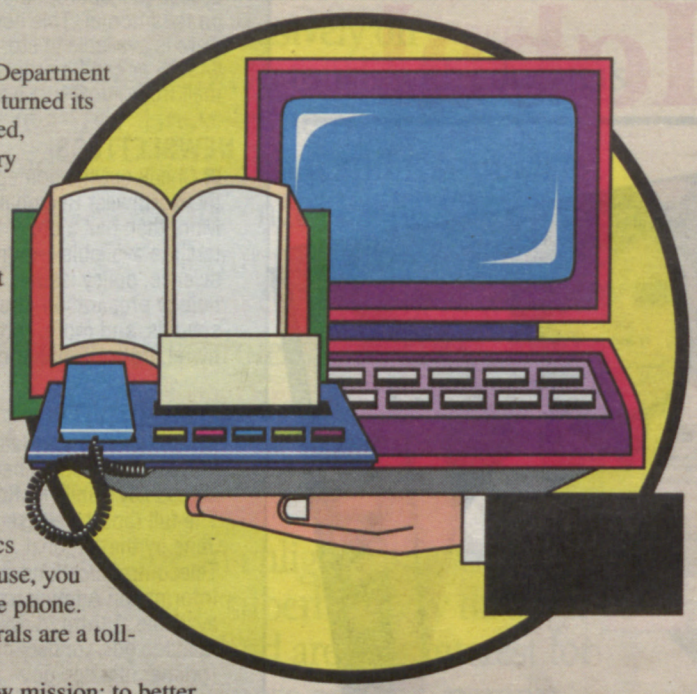
MULTIMEDIA

■ "Multimedia Reports," a publication that provides information to help educators choose multimedia technology to meet their classroom needs, offers complimentary copies of its spring and summer issues. Call 800/722-3505.

RESEARCH CLUES

Education Information To Go

You probably know more about the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame than you do about the National Library of Education. That's about to change.



Last year, the Department of Education turned its small, outdated, underutilized library into a large, well-staffed, techno-savvy facility that aims to answer just about any education question you can dream up.

Now when you need to know the national dropout rate, the latest research on class size, or the statistics on teens and drug use, you can just pick up the phone. Answers and referrals are a toll-free call away.

The library's new mission: to better serve the taxpayers who fund it.

"Our goal is to make available as much information as possible as quickly and easily as possible," explains Sharon Robinson, assistant secretary for educational research and improvement.

"Most teachers don't have time to go to a university library and scour through microfiche to get the information they need," says Robinson, a former teacher and NEA activist. "Now they don't have to."

The new National Library of Education is the largest federally funded library in the world devoted solely to education, according to Maura Daly, a staffer there. "We have more than 200,000 books and 750 periodicals. And we're trying to be user-friendly."

If volume is any indicator, they're succeeding. "Every day, we answer 300 written requests and 200 phone calls," Daly says. "And every month, people make about 500,000 'visits' to our site on the World Wide Web."

The "vast majority" of requests are for statistical information, Daly explains. "People want to know how many girls take advanced math and science classes, how many minorities graduate from high school, all sorts of things."

The library has several statisticians on staff to answer those questions.

Others ask questions that are a bit tougher to answer, says Daly. "Like the woman who called and said, 'Hello. Should I move to Kentucky?' She wanted to know if the schools there were the best for her kids."

More realistically, staffers from the National Library of Education can answer questions about:

- programs and activities of the Department of Education
- Department of Ed publications
- statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics
- education-related materials from other federal agencies
- services and resources available through the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), the largest education database in the world.

For more information, see the numbers, e-mail addresses, and Web sites referenced below.

National Library of Education
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Capitol Place
Washington, DC 20208-5721

Reference/Research/Statistics (Research inquiries)	800/424-1616
Within Washington area	202/219-1692
Fax	202/219-1696
Electronic requests	Library@inet.ed.gov
World Wide Web site	http://www.ed.gov
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)	
Access ERIC	800/LET-ERIC
Fax	202/219-1817
Library Administration	202/219-2289
Fax	202/219-1870
Circulation/Interlibrary Loan	202/219-2238
Electronic requests	Libloans@inet.ed.gov
Legislative Reference Service	202/401-1045
Fax	202/401-9023
Technology Resources Center (Educational technology information)	202/219-1699
Datatape Sales	202/219-1522

A fundamentally different approach to fashion. Head-to-toe outfits that save time and money without sacrificing an ounce of style.

save 15% on any purchase of $60 or more.

save 20% on any purchase of $75 or more.

Present this coupon to receive your discount.
Only one coupon or discount may be used with any one purchase.
This coupon is not valid on catalog purchases nor redeemable for cash.
Offer expires December 31, 1995. Ring 5429

LERNER NEW YORK

THE HEALTHY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Conquering the Sick Building Syndrome and Other Environmental Hazards In and Around Your School

Leading environmental scientists, physicians, engineers and educators wrote the 22 chapters that offer practical advice for dealing economically and non-toxically with such schoolbuilding problems as pests, carpeting and other floor coverings, toxic cleaning materials, and poor lighting. There is also information on complying with federal and state regulations regarding air quality, cafeteria food, chemical emissions, and scores of other environmental issues that affect every teacher, ESP staffer, and child in your school. 456 pp.

"A truly unique publication. It is comprehensive and informative, yet it is very readable."
Ellen H. Stein
Kindergarten Teacher, Baltimore, MD

Special Member's Price: $21.95

Regular price is $24.95. Use stock #1863-X-20-VL to get the special member price of $21.95 (plus $3.00 shipping and handling).

Order Toll-Free 1-800-229-4200

or mail to:
NEA Professional Library,
P.O. Box 509,
West Haven, CT 06516

IDEA EXCHANGE

Patch Work

I came up with a project to bridge the gap between my community and law enforcement officers. My fourth graders write to police officers across the United States and in several foreign countries requesting the shoulder patches they wear on their uniforms. The response has been fantastic!

Students have collected more than 700 patches, including some from the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Japan, plus police helmets from Botswana, Africa, and England. They've gotten letters, badges, pins, key rings, stickers and pencils, too.

As we receive the patches, we place them on a wall map on the corresponding state. Students learn geography and brush up on writing skills as they compose the letters.

An added benefit: My kids think of police officers as their friends and as people they can go to for help.

Barbara Putorti
Moraine Elementary School
Prospect, Pennsylvania

A Howling Success

Each year my fourth graders and I "adopt" an animal, like a manatee, or a human, like a policeman, who then becomes the focus of classroom lessons. Last year, I teamed up with other teachers so the entire school could adopt a pack of wolves.

We raised $100 so the students could support a local effort to raise our state's decimated wolf population. A Department of Natural Resources park ranger explained to students the state's plan to add some 80 wolves to the unpopulated northern parts of the state.

Art teacher Donn Hanson crafted a life-sized papier mache wolf, speech pathologist Carol Getman quilted a wolf flag, and music teacher Nancy Gorder composed the music for a student-written piece, "The Wolf Song."

It'll be a hard act to top but we're trying again this year as we adopt a Wisconsin writer.

Dianne Bergenske
Mineral Point Elementary School
Mineral Point, Wisconsin

Tasty Freeze

To explain physical change to my eighth grade physical science students, I have the kids make ice cream popsicles in test tubes. We use a styrofoam cup, straw, ice, salt, a clean test tube, and the ice cream mixture, which is made up of half and half, sugar, and vanilla flavoring. (No recipe, just mix to taste).

Students simply put the mixture in a test tube (about a third full), place the test tube in the cup, and add ice and salt. They put the straw in the tube and let it sit for a few minutes and *voilá*—liquid to solid in the course of one class period!

When frozen, the popsicles are quite edible. Just make sure the test tubes are new or only used for this purpose.

Craig Hill
Jason Lee Middle School
Vancouver, Washington

Share *Your* Ideas

You can pass along your classroom tips to *NEA Today*'s 2.2 million readers in one of these five ways:

- By mail to Idea Exchange, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036.
- By phone, (202)822-7201.
- By fax, (202)822-7206.
- By NEA Online, keyword NEA Today.
- By E-mail to *NEA Today*@aol.com

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY

King Day Materials: Order Now

Living the Dream: Let Freedom Ring
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
RIGHT TO VOTE
JOBS AND FREEDOM
NON Violence
"We must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."
Martin Luther King, Jr. Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, December, 1964.
REMEMBER
CELEBRATE
ACT
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
LET FREEDOM RING
When we to ring... able... to and sing...
allow freedom we will be join hands free at last!

To help you celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr., Day—coming up on January 15—NEA once again announces the availability of the "Commemorative Freedom Trail Poster/Holiday Guide." This full-color, 18" by 28", two-sided poster highlights events in the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. The poster/holiday guide offers many suggestions for activities that Association affiliates and members can use to commemorate King's life.

The Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday Commission will send Freedom Trail posters and holiday guides at a reduced rate to NEA members.

The Commission will also fill NEA members' orders for full-color 8 1/2" x 13 1/4" brochures. Also offered at a reduced price, the brochures are ideal for displaying on bulletin boards, and distributing to students and participants at King holiday activities. Listed below are prices for selected quantities.

Freedom Trail Posters/Holiday Guides

1-5	$6.00 each
6-10	$5.00 each
11 or more	$4.00 each

Freedom Trail Brochures (minimum order of 25)

25-99	$.45 each
100-499	$.40 each
500 or more	$.35 each

Specify the number of posters or brochures you're ordering and combine both orders in one payment.

When submitting your order, send your name, address, and phone number, along with your payment by check, money order, or purchase order made payable to Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday Commission. Mail this information and your payment to: Freedom Trail, 10312 Crimson Tree Court, P.O. Box 1501, Columbia, MD 21044. For more information, call 800/488-8329.

When 2.2 million people get together, it's bound to raise interest

(APY) Accurate as of 9/10/95.

One of the highest Money Market rates anywhere, exclusively for NEA members

With the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account, you get the buying power of 2.2 million members, and the higher rates that have consistently beaten *Money* magazine's best.

Low minimum balance

Open your account with as little as $500. Compare that to other accounts which require $2,500 or more!

Available whenever you need it

Your money is 100% liquid. Write up to three checks per month, absolutely free.

Guaranteed safety

Issued by MBNA America, one of the highest rated banks for safety, your account is FDIC insured up to $100,000 per depositor.

Open your account today

Join NEA members coast to coast earning one of the highest interest rates in the nation. Just call **1-800-348-4632 ext. 3106** Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., and let your money benefit from the power of membership.

See how much more you'll earn with the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account.

Money Market Account	Annual Percentage Yield*	NEA Advantage
NEA-Sponsored Money Market	5.82%	—
Citibank, NY	3.51%	65.81%
Seattle First, WA	2.26%	158.09%
First Interstate, TX	3.14%	85.11%
First Chicago, IL	3.20%	81.88%

Rates are subject to change weekly. Call today for current rates.

*Annual Percentage Yield (APY) for the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account is valid from 9/4/95 to 9/10/95 and based on a bonus rate of 1% for the first 60 days. The current interest rate paid on the account is 6.50%, with an APY of 5.82%. The minimum to open the account and obtain the APY is $500. Daily balances below $500 receive an interest rate of the DONOGHUE MONEY FUND AVERAGE, less .25% which is currently 5.00% with an APY of 5.12%. All other APYs valid as of 9/6/95, based on a $2,500 minimum opening deposit. Fees could reduce earnings on the account. Rates subject to change after account is opened. MBNA America is a federally registered service mark of MBNA Bank, N.A. Member FDIC.

©1995 MBNA America Bank, N.A.

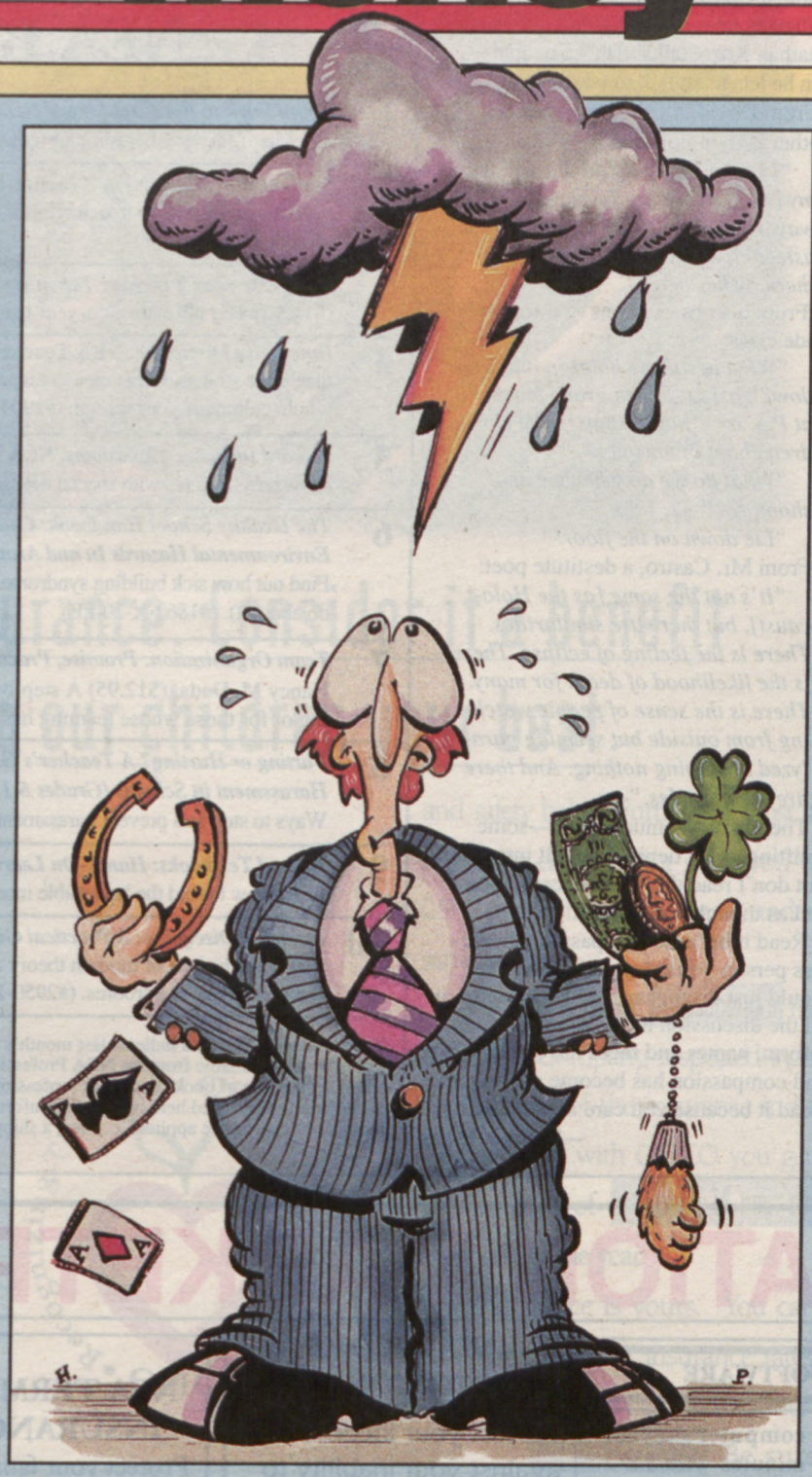
nea Member Benefits

MBNA AMERICA®

Member FDIC

The NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account

Money



RISK TAKERS & Money Makers

High risk, high return? Not always. That's what makes taking risks with your savings so tough—and so important to your financial future.

Many Americans think investing is akin to gambling. For them, risk is the chance that a catastrophe of some kind or other will befall their investments, and they will lose money. These risk avoiders want all their money in the bank, where it's guaranteed to be safe by the U.S. government. For them, investment decisions are simple: Which bank pays the best rate?

But avoiding risk is not so easy. People who keep their money in the bank face risks, too—chiefly that they won't have enough money to meet their financial goals because the rates they earn are too low. Thinking about how to measure risk is an important step to becoming more successful investors.

We've all heard that risk and reward go hand-in-hand. The higher the potential return, the higher the investment risk. That means that you should make an effort to learn what risk is and try to stretch your own risk tolerance so that you can earn a better return.

Even inexperienced investors have probably encountered an income investment and a growth investment. A bank passbook account is a conservative, guaranteed income investment. You take your principal, let's say it's $10,000, and put it in the bank.

Not only are you guaranteed that you will get your $10,000 back, but you are guaranteed that you will receive income of 5 1/2 percent or whatever the going rate is for as long as it is in the bank.

Now consider a real estate investment. Let's say you take the same $10,000 and use it as a down payment for a $100,000 house. There is no guarantee that you will ever see your $10,000 again. But if the house appreciates to $120,000 in two years, you will have a $20,000 gain. Your $10,000 is now worth $30,000 (minus commissions).

If you put the $10,000 in the bank, you would have income of about $1,150 in two years. If you put the $10,000 into a house, you might have no earning, or you might have earnings of $20,000 or more.

Real estate is a growth investment. So are stocks. Although many stocks pay dividends, or a regular income payout, it's the possibility of appreciation in the stock price—or growth—that draws investors to stocks.

All investors should include growth investments in their portfolios. But those who are saving for the long term, such as retirement, should emphasize growth investments.

Here are a few of the risks investors should understand:

➤ Inflation risk, or the risk that you will lose your money to inflation if you don't invest.

➤ Opportunity risk, or the risk that you will tie your money up in an investment with little earning potential when the stock market is soaring.

➤ Reinvestment risk, or the risk that you will be unable to reinvest your dividends, earnings, or even your principal at the same rate in the future.

➤ Concentration risk, or the risk that you'll put too many eggs in one basket—or too much money in one stock.

➤ Interest rate risk, or the risk that changes in interest rates—and in expected future interest rates—will cause the prices of some investments to rise or fall suddenly.

➤ Marketability risk, or the risk that there will be no ready market for your investment if you want to sell it in a hurry.

—Mary Rowland

Ready To Risk?

Here's a quick quiz that allows you to calculate your risk tolerance.

1. The more time you have to let your money grow, the more aggressive you can be. Give yourself 1 point if you'll need your money in three to five years; 3 points if you can invest for seven to eight years; and 6 points if you can invest for 10 years or more.

2. How much do you already know about investing? Give yourself one point for each of the following that you could do:

➤ Explain a money market fund.

➤ Explain the difference between the Dow Jones Average of 30 Industrials and the Standard & Poor's 500 Stock Index.

➤ Name one fund that invests in emerging overseas markets.

➤ Name one U.S. growth fund.

➤ Name one U.S. small company fund.

➤ Give the investment objective of an equity income fund.

➤ Provide yesterday's stock market close.

Bonus: Give yourself 5 bonus points if you can explain how the futures market works.

3. If you're willing to spend time learning about investing, you should be willing to take on informed risk. Give yourself one point for each of the following that you do regularly:

➤ Watch daily financial news.

➤ Read the daily business pages in the newspaper.

➤ Keep abreast of changes in the stock market and interest rates.

➤ Subscribe to an investment magazine like *Money*.

➤ Subscribe to an investment newsletter.

4. How much money do you have to invest? If you have less than $2,500, give yourself 1 point, $2,500 to $5,000—2 points; $5,000 to $10,000—3 points; $10,000 to $50,000—5 points; more than $50,000—6 points.

5. Now think about your income. If you make less than $20,000, give yourself 1 point; $20,000 to $30,000—2 points; $30,000 to $50,000—3 points; more than $50,000—4 points.

6. The younger you are, the more time you have for your money to grow. If you're under age 30, give yourself 5 points, 31 to 39—4 points, 40 to 50—3 points, 51 to 62—2 points, over 62—1 point.

If you scored under 15, you should be conservative with your investments. If you scored 15 to 25, you are in a good position to take prudent risks. A score of more than 25 indicates that you have the knowledge, resources, and time to make aggressive investments.

BOOK BEAT

Children In Hell

Amid the ruins of the South Bronx, author Jonathan Kozol finds truth in the voices of children. Listen to them.

Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation.
Jonathan Kozol.
Crown Publishers, Inc. 304 pp. $23.

"[Living here] is not like being in jail. It's more like being hidden. It's as if you have been put in a garage where, if they don't have room for something but aren't sure if they should throw it out, they put it there where they don't need to think of it again."

—Isabel, 15 years old

A lot happens in the "garage" young Isabel calls the South Bronx, most of it bad. Parents die of AIDS, leaving children who may die of AIDS. Drug dealers and prostitutes fill the streets. Children live with hunger and disease, violence and despair.

Still there are many who live there who handle the adversities of their lives with resilience, love, and belief in God. Author Jonathan Kozol talks to those people—then he lets them talk to you.

From David, a young man whose mother is dying of AIDS:

"I keep waking up myself. Even if my mother isn't up, I wake up anyway. I go in her room to see if she's asleep. If she's sleeping, I just sit there by her bed."

From his observations of a fourth grade class:

"What are those holes in our window?" asks a fourth grade teacher at P.S. 65. "Bullet shots!" the children chant in unison.

"What do we do when we hear shooting?"

"Lie down on the floor!"

From Mr. Castro, a destitute poet:

"It's not the same [as the Holocaust], but there are similarities. There is the feeling of eclipse. There is the likelihood of death for many. There is the sense of people watching from outside but seeming paralyzed and doing nothing. And there are the miracles."

There's more, much more—some uplifting, most depressing, all important. But don't read this book because you feel as though you should.

Read it because you passed a homeless person yesterday and wished he would just disappear. Read it because, in all the discussion today about welfare reform, names and faces have been lost and compassion has become a dying art. Read it because you care about children.

—Stefanie Weiss

The NEA Professional Library's Top Ten
NEA Bestsellers

Current Rank		Previous Rank
1	***Countdown to the First Day of School*, Schell & Burden.** ($4.95) A "must-have" checklist for every beginning elementary teacher. (#2150-9-00-FB)	[3]
2	***Student Portfolios*, NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books.** ($9.95) Insights from your colleagues on how to use portfolios to assess and enhance student learning. (#2901-1-00-FB)	[2]
3	***The First Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8)*,** Bosch & Kersey. ($14.95) The ultimate first-year teacher's handbook. (#1862-1-10-FB)	[1]
4	***Innovative Discipline*, NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books.** ($9.95) Innovative discipline strategies that elementary and secondary teachers say can change the whole culture of your school. (#2904-6-00-FB)	[5]
5	***Toward Inclusive Classrooms*, NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books.** ($9.95) Six stories that show how students with special needs can learn with their peers. (#2903-8-00-FB)	[6]
6	***The Healthy School Handbook: Conquering the Sick Building Syndrome and Other Environmental Hazards In and Around Your School*,** Norma L. Miller, ed. ($21.95) Find out how sick building syndrome affects teaching and learning (and what you can do about it). (#1863-X-20-FB)	[4]
7	***Team Organization: Promise, Practices and Possibilities,*** by Thomas O. Erb and Nancy M. Doda. ($12.95) A step-by-step guide for schools wanting to begin teaming or for those whose teaming has grown stale. (#3075-3-00-FB)	
8	***Flirting or Hurting? A Teacher's Guide on Student-to-Student Sexual Harassment in Schools (Grades 6-12),*** by Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom. ($15.95) Ways to stop and prevent harassment. (#1864-8-00-FB)	[7]
9	***Beyond Textbooks: Hands-On Learning*, NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books.** ($9.95) Learn how to find the "teachable moment" in real-world activities. (#2906-2-00-FB)	[9]
10	***Inspiring Discipline: A Practical Guide for Today's Classrooms*,** Merrill Harmin. ($12.95) The best of modern theory and research in a form that works for real teachers in real classrooms. (#2950-X-00-FB)	[3]

The numbers in brackets indicate last month's rankings, if any. All the resources listed above are published by and available from the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community. To order any title listed here or for more information, call 800/229-4200. (Note: The prices listed are member prices, where applicable. Also, a shipping and handling charge will be added to all orders.)

EDUCATION MARKETPLACE

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS

Want perfect pupils? 2 manuals ($35) create self-managed kids begging advice. Work, stress & guilt fade. Send SASE to 21863 Brill, Morano Valley, CA 92553.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS

PTSD in Children, a video for school personnel. Features 5 specialists. $95. 800/888-5236.

EMPLOYMENT

Jobs for teachers/principals. Send SASE to NTC, Box 1257, Boston, MA 02118-1257, 617/267-3204.

MISCELLANEOUS

Many Nations Calendar 1996. A 98 page wall calendar with over 700 holidays, festivals, historical events, and birth dates including descriptions of each ($12.95 + ship). POB 1426, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

SOFTWARE

Let your computer do your grades in minutes with *TS Gradebook 2.0* for Windows. 10 day money-back guarantee. Call 800/393-3415. $67.50.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The University of Sarasota offers the Ed.D. and the M.A.Ed. Scheduled for working educators. Innovative distance learning models. Variety of concentrations. Call today 800/331-5995.

INSURANCE

NEA Level Premium Term Life Insurance

Up to $25,000 of free life insurance for the first six months with NEA Level Premium Term Life Insurance. No medical exam required. Call NEA Member Benefits at 1-800-637-4636.

NEA INCOME PROTECTION PLAN

Protect your income against your inability to work! NEA Income Protection Plans help assure that you have enough to pay your family's monthly living expenses should you become disabled. Call 1-800-637-4636 to request more information.

NEA AD&D Insurance

Covers your entire family for $19 per year. And members cannot be turned down for coverage! Call 1-800-523-5877 to request an application.

NEA TERM LIFE INSURANCE™

Protect your family's future with NEA Term Life Insurance.™ UP TO $300,000 of decreasing term life insurance coverage is available. Optional spouse and dependents coverage is also available. Call 1-800-523-5877 for more information.

FINANCIAL

The NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate® CD

is exclusively for NEA members. It offers higher interest, FDIC safety, and guaranteed returns. Call NEA Financial Services at 800/348-4632 for current rates and to request an application.

To place an Education Marketplace advertisement...Just send in your notice, with appropriate payment, to Education Marketplace at the address below. Rates: Educational Products/Services and Academic Employment Opportunities Categories: $115 per line; 3 line minimum. Display ads—$895 per column inch, 5-inch maximum. Consumer Products/Services, Summer Employment, and Business Opportunities Categories: $130 per line; 3 line minimum. Display ads—$1155 per column inch, 5-inch maximum. Deduct 10% if you're an NEA member. Please count 30 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation). Contact NEA TODAY Education Marketplace, 1201 16th St., N.W. Washington, DC 20036; 202/822-7913.

Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn

Suzanne Stutman is president of the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Mental Health Initiatives. A practicing psychotherapist with master's degrees in social work and education, Stutman has written extensively and lectured throughout the world on the issue of channeling children's anger.

ANGER

For kids today, learning to manage anger can mean the difference between life and death.

Where do children learn how to handle anger?
Children learn about anger and the expression and management of it by watching their family, others in their community, and people at school. If they come from a harsh home, where anger is managed through alcohol and drugs or abuse, they begin to learn that experiencing anger can be either very dangerous or very powerful.

Children then bring the behaviors they learn to school and can be hurtful either to themselves or others. Those who turn the anger inward, especially females, become withdrawn, hopeless, despairing. Those who act out the anger may mouth off, destroy property, threaten other students, show disrespect to teachers and other school workers, and be a general source of disruption.

How can educators tell when a student has a serious problem with anger?
Everybody feels anger. Statistically, each of us gets angry once or twice a day, and adolescents—who are more naturally aroused—more often. So you have to watch for patterns and changes in behavior.

An increased rate of agitation and anxiety, withdrawal, any signs of eating disorders, increased aggression or excitability, and more flying off the handle—these all are signs.

There are other problems of acting out and reckless behavior, too, like starting to come to school late or not showing up at all, getting into fights, getting picked up for shoplifting, or showing signs of beginning drug use. Teachers may notice increased academic difficulties and a marked drop in the performance of students who are having problems dealing with their anger.

Once it's clear that a student has a problem with anger, what then?
If you have a good relationship with the kid, talk to the student and find out what's happening. If you think that you're not the right person—that there is another teacher, or coach, or other school worker that the kid trusts—talk with them or with the school counselor. Sometimes calling home to speak to parents is appropriate, but sometimes—if the problem stems from abuse at home—it can make the problem worse.

Should schools be doing more than just helping the kids with problems?
Yes. Teaching all kids about the management of anger—and reinforcing this with staff education, too—should be part of the school milieu, beginning in pre-school and continuing through college. School is a very important piece of a child's world, and anger management has to be part of the language of the classroom.

What's the basic approach you advocate?
Our approach is based on cognitive psychology research that shows that if you can change the way you think, you can change the way you feel. We all have a right to anger—but not to be hurtful or destructive. The basic idea is to teach kids (and parents and teachers) how to use anger as a tool for change and how to deal with the anger of others.

Some say teaching kids to deal with anger is a parental responsibility.
We have to get back to the idea that we're all working together on this—schools, families, PTAs, and other community groups. Schools alone can't solve the problem, but I believe that teachers can be a wonderful influence. Anger management is another vital skill to teach kids so that they can have the best possible future.

What should educators do when faced with violence or guns?
The skill to manage anger is something taught in school—but, like fire prevention, it shouldn't be taught during a fire. Then you just have to get out because of the heat. School workers need to protect themselves. Though anger management skills are useful in many situations, you may not be able to use them when a student comes in with a gun.

Violence has entered our schools in new ways—that make the kind of training I'm talking about even more important.

What about the anger that teachers and other school employees may feel?
Pressures on teachers have increased greatly not only from violence in schools and from kids coming to school with much more serious problems, but also from things like larger classes and fewer supplies. Things like the break-up of students' families can put tremendous pressure on teachers, too. That's why I believe teachers need training in channeling anger—not only to help students, but to help themselves.

Resources

For more information contact:

➤ The Institute for Mental Health Initiatives has videos, manuals, and pamphlets. For a pamphlet on RETHINK, write to 4545 42nd St., N.W., Washington, DC 20016. To order their training manual, "Learning to Manage Anger—Discussion Leader's Manual for the RETHINK: Workout for Teens," send $4.95 per manual plus $4 shipping for the entire order to Research Press, Dept. 142, P.O. Box 9177, Champaign, IL 61826, or call 217/352-3273.

➤ The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association have jointly produced a 10-page brochure, "Raising Children to Resist Violence: What You Can Do." For a single free copy and ordering information, send a SASE (32 cents) business-size envelope to APA, Public Interest Department, 750 First St., N.E, Washington, DC 20002.

➤ The National Association of Social Workers has produced two brochures that fold out into posters. "100 Ways You Can Stop Violence...With Justice For All," is aimed at teens and adults. "Stopping Violence Starts With Me...And Ends With Us," is for young children. For a single free copy of each and bulk ordering information, send a SASE (52 cents for both, 32 cents for just one) business-size envelope to Office of Public Affairs, NASW, 750 First St., N.E., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002.

SchoolSite

NEA members working to make schools run better

When are 13 heads better than one? All the time. At least that's the attitude of the custodians and maintenance workers in East Grand Rapids, Michigan, who are part of a 13-member team that manages maintenance needs in the district.

Three years ago, a custodial supervisor made all the decisions—without input from staff. Now a committee of 12 head custodians and maintenance workers, plus one administrator, meets weekly to set priorities and assign responsibilities.

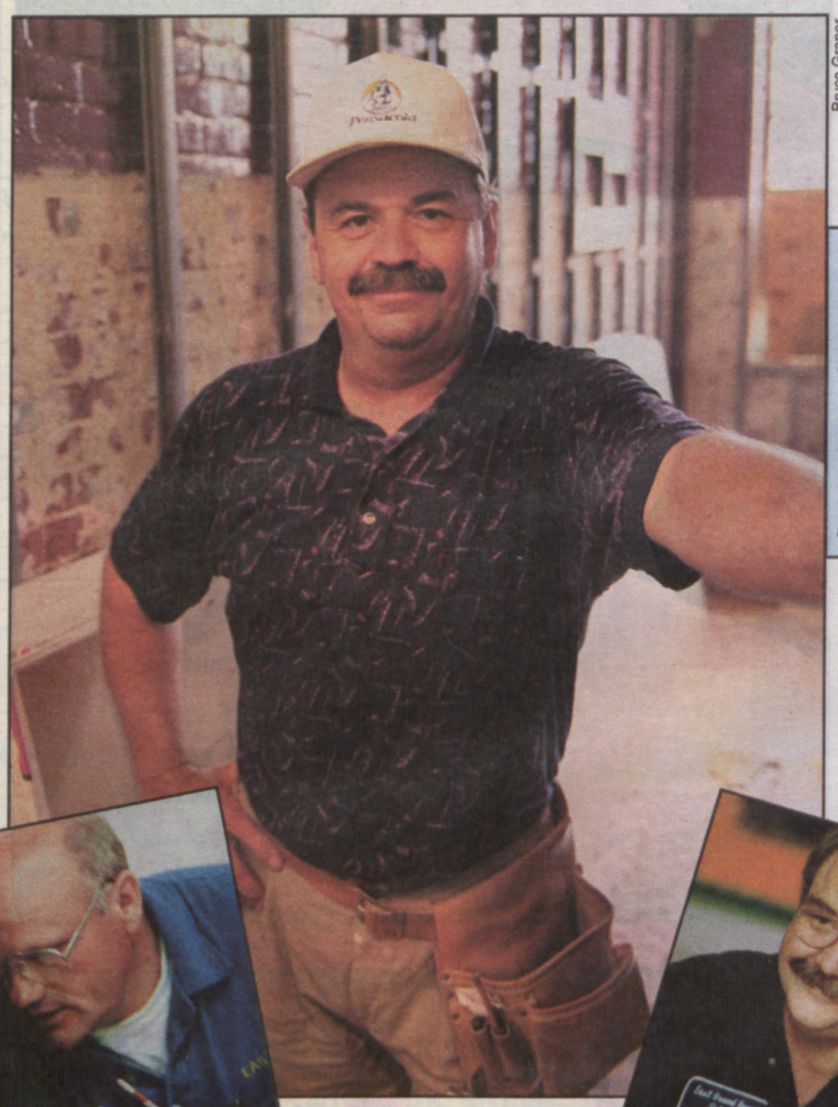
As a result, the district saves tens of thousands of dollars, maintenance needs are handled more efficiently, and the learning environment for students has improved.

"It's like we're running our own small business," explains Bob Wiseman, a head custodian and president of East Grand Rapids ESP. "There's a sense of ownership, and the quality of work is much better than it used to be."

Committee members—specialists in everything from plumbing to electronics—routinely assess problems in the district based on observation and discussions with building custodians and staff.

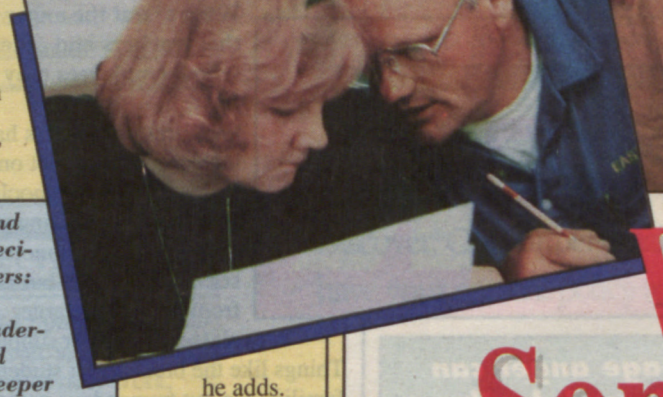
When assignments are handed out, there's more cooperation within the maintenance ranks. People volunteer to help others in a tight spot, Wiseman says, in exchange for help the next time they need it.

"Before you may not have ever seen the guys in the other buildings," he adds. "Now we know if we have a problem, they're only a phone call away. It's built camaraderie."



Bruce Graner

Larry Bowman, a member of the Escambia Education Support Personnel Association, is one of 10 school district employees making improvements to schools—and school budgets.



East Grand Rapids decision makers: secretary Ellen Vanderlugt, head groundskeeper Bob Mead, and maintenance worker Bob Ledford (right).

Photos by Joe Howell

When problems arise, the committee thrashes out solutions, often discovering alternatives that might have been missed by a single person.

One example: An architect's plans for the construction of a handicapped ramp at one school involved cutting a new entrance through walls, plumbing, and electrical wiring. At a custodian's suggestion, the ramp was raised 12 inches, allowing workers to use an existing entrance and saving the school district thousands of dollars.

"People know their opinions are valued," Wiseman says. "Their ideas aren't always used, but at least they're given a shot—and that's what everyone wants."

As custodians and maintenance workers feel more included, they're making more time to get involved with the kids.

"One guy helped build an aquarium," Wiseman says. "Another, who lives on a farm, brought a calf to a classroom. The kids loved it. Before, these staff members weren't really inclined to take the time to do these things."

In addition, relations between the administration and NEA members have improved. "Our superintendent has gotten a lot of flack from superintendents in other districts for letting us do what used to be done by an administrator," Wiseman says. "But we've proven we can do it, and he believes in us."

"We're making great progress as a team," echoes superintendent James Morse. "It's working."

Across the country in Pensacola, Florida, NEA member Larry Bowman says doing renovations in-house saves the district "a heap of darn money." On a small project, like the renovation of a restroom, "an outside contractor would ask for $28,000," Bowman explains. "We can do it for $14,000.

Bowman is part of a ten-member "capital improvement crew" that handles renovation projects for the Escambia school district. Like the committee in East Grand Rapids, the crew has it all over outside contractors.

"We save on more than just the cost of labor and materials," says administrator Ted Kirchharr. "We save the overhead costs of hiring an architect, going through the bidding process, awarding a contract, and developing plans."

While changing orders usually costs a lot of money, the in-house crew can adapt more easily. "With us, if a principal wants to make a minor change, we can usually do it," Bowman says. "And the money we save can usually cover any additional cost."

Besides saving money, having an in-house crew saves time, provides greater flexibility, and produces higher quality work. Last summer, Hurricane Erin did $8.6 million worth of damage to Escambia schools—$1 million of that at Workman Middle School alone.

"Having the flexibility of this crew," says Kirchharr, "really came in handy."

And, Bowman adds, "we're there every day. A warranty on a job by a contractor is usually a year and then you never see them again. We know that we'll be back at that school again one day—it's in our interest to do a good job."

So far, the in-house crew hasn't eliminated the use of outside contractors—the district still contracts out work projected to cost more than $200,000.

"We don't handle the really large projects yet," Bowman says. "But I would love for our group to get bigger and just take over everything. We do excellent work and we're saving the district a lot of money. They should just give us a chance."

—Jillian Safer

Want Something Done Right...?

Forget contracting out. When school maintenance crews do the work of supervisors and outside contractors themselves, they save districts money and serve kids better, too.

SchoolSite is a new *NEA Today* feature highlighting efforts by NEA members to make schools run more smoothly. If you're working to create a safer and healthier learning environment, save your district money, or better serve the entire education community, we want to know about it.

Get your story to us by sending a note to *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Or you can send a fax to 202/822-7206, an e-mail to NEATODAY2@aol.com, or call 202/822-7258.

International

IN HIROSHIMA

Kids Work To Heal The Wounds of War

On the anniversary of the atomic bomb attack on Japan, NEA member Gerard Brooker and 10 Westport, Connecticut students stood on Japanese soil in the name of peace.

Left: NEA member Gerard Brooker speaks to peace conference participants. Above: Japanese and American students attending the peace conference arrive at Tokyo International Airport. At right, the cover of the Hiroshima peace summit program.

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, to the haunting toll of a ceremonial temple bell, Connecticut teacher Gerard Brooker sat quietly with 10 of his students at "ground zero" in the city of Hiroshima, Japan.

Together, they imagined themselves in that same spot 50 years earlier. Had they been there, at the precise moment an atomic bomb exploded, all of them would have been vaporized.

What brought these and hundreds of other students (thousands of miles from home) to this symbol of the horrors of atomic warfare?

"Summit 1995 Hiroshima," a week-long international conference Brooker planned as part of a lifelong quest to further the cause of peace.

"Six years ago, following a visit to Hiroshima, I began to work on the idea of a student peace conference," explains Brooker, chair of the English department at Staples High School in Westport, Connecticut.

"But I wanted it to be more than a conference to talk about the horrors of warfare," he says. "I hoped it would be a chance to talk about healing, the resilience of the human spirit, and the driving hope that moves all of us to build a better world for future generations."

To set up the conference, Brooker spent six years organizing fundraisers and furiously faxing messages to Hiroshima Jogakuin High School staffers, the Japanese co-sponsors of the event.

This summer, the conference—timed to mark the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—took place with more than 220 students from 15 countries and 1,500 Japanese students in attendance.

"For one week, in workshops and planning meetings, the students talked about ending war, world hunger, and environmental devastation," recalls Brooker. "And they did so by reaching beyond the boundaries of language and culture."

Students also lived with Japanese families, spoke with atomic bomb survivors, and visited local schools.

The highlight? A ceremonial exchange of wreaths of folded paper cranes made by Westport students and wreaths made by Japanese students. The origami cranes come from an old Japanese folk tale that says those who fold 1,000 paper cranes will be protected from illness. The tale was made famous following World War II, when Sadako Sasaki, a young child who'd contracted leukemia as a result of the atomic explosion, began to fold cranes in hopes that she'd be cured.

Sadako died in 1955, after completing 964 paper cranes. Her friends made the remaining 36 and placed them in her coffin. "Just as Sadako's friends finished her cranes, our students are helping to finish the work begun by the people of Hiroshima," says Brooker.

"We've all returned home with projects dedicated to ending suffering, whether it be from poverty, hunger, or environmental pollution. That's the real lesson of this conference," Brooker adds, "to heal by action, not words."

—Anita Merina

IN BEIJING

Focus on Women's Rights

NEA Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan was one of 45 U.S. delegates to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in September. She spoke with* NEA Today *staff writer Victoria Lytle about the historic meeting.

What was the highlight of the conference for you?

I was thrilled to witness and be a part of the interaction that occurs when people have a common purpose that brings them together—our roles as mothers, wives, parents, sisters, daughters, workers, entrepreneurs, community activists, and leaders on the important issues of our times. And Hillary Clinton had a wonderfully uplifting presence for the audience—despite all the pressure she'd received from those who said she shouldn't go.

What was the most important message that emerged?

Participants echoed the importance of human rights, including eliminating all forms of violence against women. There was specific attention to educating women about their rights, training officials in human rights, and bringing to justice perpetrators of violence against women.

What will come out of the conference?

The conference will mobilize people to push governments to do three things. First, improve women's economic opportunities by removing legal and practical barriers that prevent women from getting training, credit, land, and opportunity. Second, strengthen families by promoting a better balance of parental responsibility for children's needs. And, third, close the gender gap in schooling by the year 2005 and ensure universal access to primary education by the year 2015.

What "gender gap in schooling"?

Many Americans may not know that access to education is denied to some 130 million girls worldwide, and that almost two-thirds of the illiterate people in the world are women. That's more than a gap—it's a chasm.

RESOURCES

TV Tips

MTV News: Unfiltered—*MTV, every Monday morning, 4-4:30 a.m. ET and PT, 3-3:30 a.m. CT and 2-2:30 a.m/5-5:30 a.m. MT.* Students submit story ideas to MTV, then produce their own newscasts on subjects like putting changing areas in men rooms (pictured here).

Lesson plans are available from MTV Music Television, "Community of the Future," 1515 Broadway, 25th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Call 800/2468-MTV.

CNN Newsroom's WorldView—*CNN, weekdays, 4:45-5 a.m. ET.* This extension of CNN Newsroom adds historical and cultural background to coverage by the network's 20 international bureaus. To enroll call 1/800-344-6217.

Fox Kids Library Presents "Goosebumps"—*FOX, one-hour special, Friday, November 3, 4:30 p.m. ET., and subsequent Fridays, 4:30-5 p.m. ET.* This series, based on R.L. Stine's children's books, tells tales about ordinary kids who find themselves in extraordinary and often scary situations.

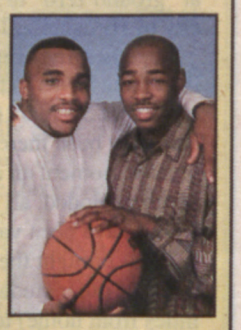
Forbidden City: The Great Within—*Discovery, Sunday, November 5, 9-10:30 p.m. ET/PT and 1-2:30 a.m. ET/PT.* This documentary commemorates the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Palace Museum in Beijing.

Zhao Fei

History's Turning Points: "The Conquest of Spain"—*The Learning Channel, Monday, November 6, 8:30-9 p.m. and 11:30 to 12 midnight ET, Saturday, 5-5:30 p.m. ET.* This episode explores the Islamic presence in Spain that began in 711 and released the country from oppression.

The Cronkite Report: Headlines & Sound Bites: Is That the Way It Is?—*Discovery, Friday, November 10, 9-10 a.m. ET/PT.* This special explores the argument that today's news organizations give Americans only what they want to know.

Hoop Dreams—*PBS, Wednesday, November 15, 8-11 p.m. ET,* The true story of two African-American high school students who dream of playing in the National Basketball Association. Plus a half-hour update that includes never-before-seen footage.



The Song Spinner—*Showtime, November 19, 6-7:30 p.m.* This live-action film tells the tale of a kingdom where all noise has been banned, including music, until a little girl lifts the shroud of silence.

These listings provided by KIDSNET, a Washington, D. C.-based clearinghouse for children's programming.

Ahead on *Teacher TV*

Looking for some proven classroom strategies? Then tune in to *Teacher TV,* the award-winning weekly magazine-style program coproduced by NEA and the Learning Channel. *Teacher TV* airs Sundays at 12:30 p.m. ET. This month:
November 5: Creating a Community of Learners
November 12: Time: Restructuring the School Day
November 19: Teaching the Academically Diverse Classroom
November 26: When Society's Problems Walk Through the Door

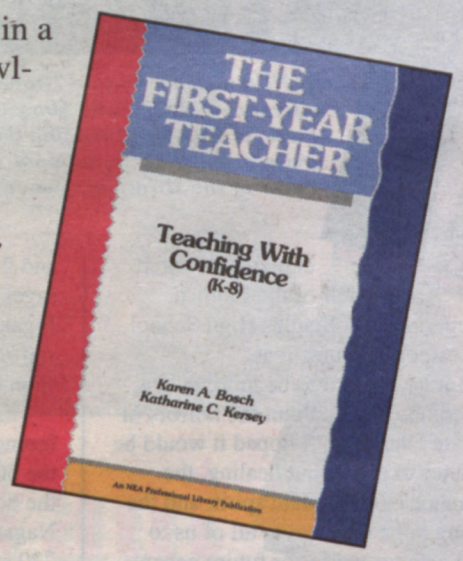
The First-Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8)

A new NEA Professional Library book
By Karen A. Bosch and Katharine C. Kersey

Whether you're in college or ready to start your career in the classroom. . .whether you're returning to the classroom of the '90s after being away or starting a new grade level, *The First-Year Teacher* will help you "hit the ground running!"

The First-Year Teacher is a practical, hands-on guide in a format that suggests rather than directs. You'll get knowledgeable help in areas such as:

- ***Making important decisions before school starts***
- ***Preparing for the first day of school***
- ***Optimizing the operations and management of your classroom***
- ***Developing strategies for working with parents***
- ***Achieving positive results with pre-tested activities***



The First-Year Teacher was developed for teachers by teachers to help meet the challenges of the first year—from before the first day to the very last. 144 pp. October 1994.

Special Discount Offer

_____ copy(ies) *The First-Year Teacher* (regular price, $18.95).
Use stock no. 1862-1-10-T8 for your ***special discounted price of only $14.95*** each (plus shipping & handling).

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Method of Payment Prices are f.o.b. West Haven, CT and subject to change without notice. Include CA or DC sales tax if applicable.

❑ **Payment enclosed** ❑ **Bill me**

Allow 3-5 weeks delivery west of the Mississippi. If you wish faster delivery, please check here to authorize extra charge for UPS service.

❑ **Yes, please ship via UPS, and bill extra charges to me.**

Order TOLL FREE 1-800-229-4200
or mail to NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516

Retirement

Credit Where Credit Is Due

Maintaining a good credit history and establishing sources of credit should be part of your retirement planning.

As you get older, it's important to establish sources of credit and maintain a good credit history. For one thing, you'll need a good credit rating to get more credit. For another, credit is convenient. Many businesses strongly prefer the use of credit cards. It's difficult, for example, to rent a car without a credit card. And, it's vital to have credit available to you for emergencies and unplanned situations.

Unfortunately, for older people, having a regular income and paying the bills on time doesn't guarantee a good credit rating. You may be denied credit because of "insufficient credit history," meaning that your lifetime of bill payments is not recorded in the national credit bureau computers.

Many older Americans formed their spending habits long before the widespread use of credit cards. Perhaps you've paid your bills on a cash basis rather than with credit cards. Or maybe your credit has been with local banks, credit unions, and department stores. These local businesses may not report monthly mortgage or loan payments to credit bureaus.

So even though you've used credit all your life, you could apply for new credit and discover that your credit report is blank. This lack of credit history can hurt your application.

You may also be denied credit because of your age, or because your income is considered insufficient. It's illegal to discriminate on the basis of age, but it happens. The law requires creditors to consider Social Security, pensions, and other non-salary income equally with employment income—but, sometimes, they don't.

If you're a widowed or divorced woman, you might encounter special credit problems. For instance, when you were married, perhaps your credit was in your husband's name and not your own. Your credit history may be blank.

The best way to begin building a credit history if you don't already have one is to apply for a major credit card. Apply in your own name (i.e., Nancy Smith, not Mrs. John Smith) and use the card periodically to establish a good credit rating.

Each payment you make will be recorded at the national credit bureaus. And, if you pay off the balance in full each month, you won't incur interest charges.

The non-profit Bankcard Holders of America offers a list of low interest and no annual fee credit cards. To obtain a copy, send a check or money order for $4 to: BHA, 524 Branch Ave., Salem, VA 24153.

Once you've established a credit history, check your credit report once every two or three years. Six months before a large planned purchase, such as buying a home, review it again.

The "Big Three" national credit bureaus are TRW, Equifax, and Trans Union (see box). Call the agencies first to verify addresses and terms for obtaining your credit report. Then send a letter requesting a copy of your file. The letter should include your name, Social Security number, date of birth, current and former addresses, and your spouse's name (if applicable).

Each of the bureaus will charge a fee (usually $8) to give you a copy of your file. If you've been denied credit, you're entitled to a free copy of your report if you contact the appropriate bureau within 30 days of receiving the denial notice.

The states of Maryland and Vermont allow consumers to get one free credit report each year upon request. Also, TRW will provide one free report upon request annually. No credit bureau offers discounts to seniors.

If you're married, you and your spouse probably have separate credit files. However, credit information on accounts opened before June 1, 1977 that are shared by a husband and wife are often reported only in the husband's name. Upon request, creditors must report the account in both names. Newer accounts are reported on an individual basis automatically.

If your credit file contains errors, you're entitled, under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, to have incomplete or inaccurate information corrected at no charge.

For example, if your file shows accounts that belong to someone else, the bureau must delete them. Or, if it shows that you were late in making payments but fails to show that you're no longer delinquent, the bureau must correct the file to show that your payments are current. Also, upon request, the bureau must send a notice of the correction to any creditor who's checked your file within the past six months.

If your credit report contains valid negative information, you can either try to correct the item by, for instance, paying an unpaid bill, or you can file a statement of up to 100 words with the credit bureau explaining your side of the story. The bureau must include that statement in your report each time it sends it out.

Contrary to popular belief, a negative credit report doesn't necessarily mean you can't obtain credit. Different creditors have different standards for granting credit. Some creditors, for example, may look only at more recent years to evaluate you for credit, and they may grant you credit if your bill-paying history has improved.

If you can't obtain credit based on your own history, you may be able to get approved if someone who has a good credit history co-signs a loan for you. Or you may be able to get a small loan or a credit card with a low limit by using your savings account as collateral.

Don't forget that under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, you can't be turned down or offered less credit because of your age. Also, your non-salary income (pension, Social Security, disability, annuity, etc.) can't be discounted. It must be given the same weight as earned income.

The law also prohibits a creditor from closing your account or requiring you to reapply for it just because you reach a certain age or retire. And a creditor may not deny you credit or close your account because credit life insurance or credit-related insurance is not available to people your age.

If you have credit problems and you need help, contact the nearest non-profit Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS), or consult a lawyer.

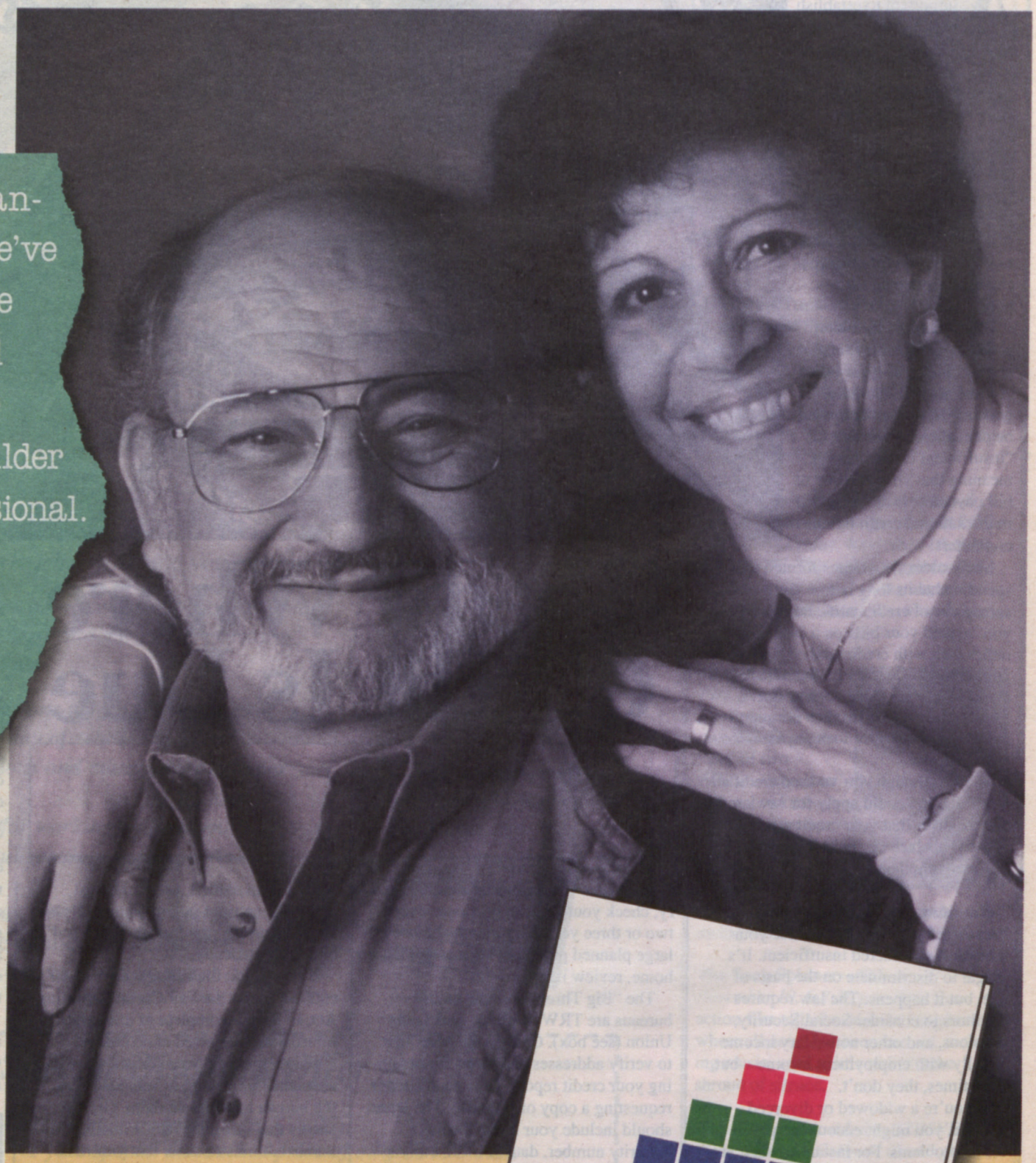
A variety of benefits are available to NEA-R members through NEA-Retired and NEA Member Benefits, including low-cost credit cards and other financial services. For more information on NEA Member Benefits programs, call 800/637-4636.

The "Big Three" Credit Bureaus

You can use the following toll-free numbers to obtain copies of your credit report or complain about errors. You will be given the appropriate address for the credit bureau in your area.

- ✔ TRW (free credit report annually upon request or after credit denial, otherwise, $8), 800/392-1122.
- ✔ Equifax ($8 or free after denial), 800/685-1111.
- ✔ Trans Union ($8 or free after denial), 800/851-2674.

"The NEA Valuebuilder helps us feel more comfortable about our retirement."



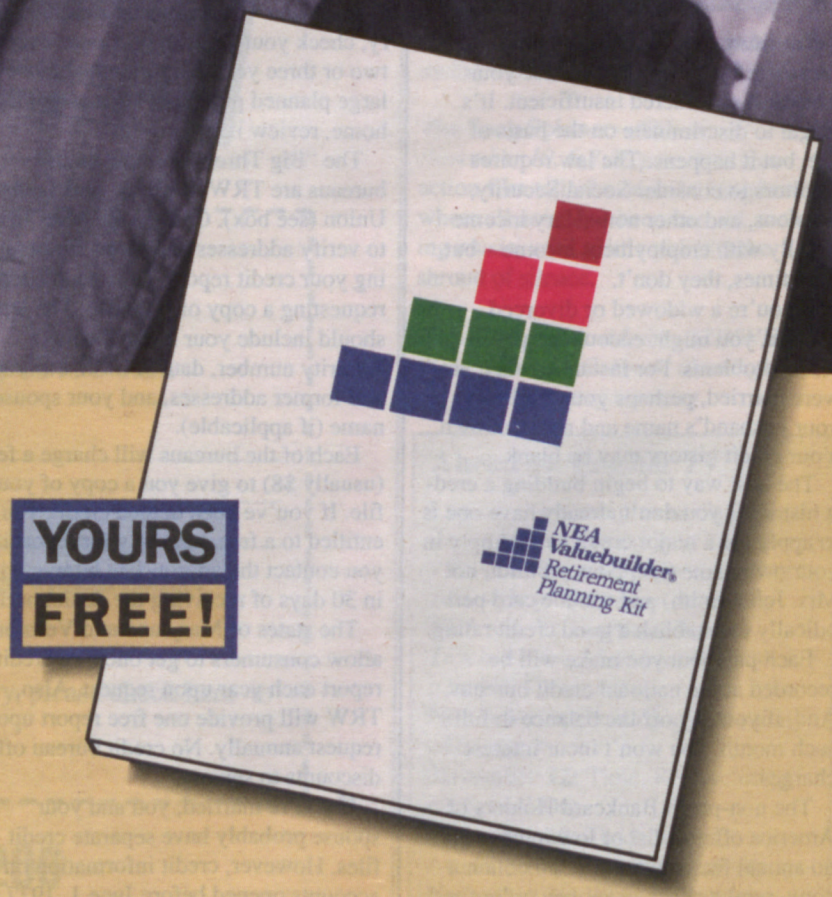
"Of all the tax-advantaged programs we've been in, this is the best for us. We feel really comfortable with our Valuebuilder Investment Professional. She takes care of everything."

Arturo and Sarah Ramos
NEA member and his wife,
Phoenix AZ

As an NEA member, you'll work with a dedicated Valuebuilder Investment Professional and learn how to lower your current taxes and grow your retirement money, tax deferred.

Find out more about the NEA Valuebuilder Annuity—the *only annuity program nationally sponsored by the NEA*. Call to request your free NEA Valuebuilder Retirement Planning Kit. It will show you, step by step, how to choose your retirement goals and plan for a more financially secure future.

Start your retirement savings plan now. Request your FREE NEA Valuebuilder® Retirement Planning Kit today.



1-800-637-4636

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. ET.

NEA Valuebuilder® Annuity

nea Member Benefits

NATIONWIDE INSURANCE
Nationwide is on your side

For more complete information about the NEA Valuebuilder® Annuity, including charges and expenses, you may obtain a prospectus from NEA Member Benefits, P.O. Box 576, Oakland, MD 21550-9972. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. The general distributor for the NEA Valuebuilder Annuity is Nationwide Financial Services, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. Nationwide Financial Services and Nationwide Life are both subsidiaries of Nationwide Corporation, a financial services holding company. The Internal Revenue Code prohibits certain distributions attributable to salary reduction contributions before an individual reaches age 59½, separates from service, dies, or becomes disabled or experiences a hardship as defined by the Code. Nationwide® is a federal service mark of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. NEA Valuebuilder® is a federal service mark of the National Education Association. Not available in Hawaii.

TVB115

Your NEA

NEA Q&A

NEA and AFT

Last summer, delegates at the NEA Representative Assembly passed a new business item on NEA and AFT merger talks. What does it say?
The item states plainly that NEA wants to pursue a merger with the American Federation of Teachers and will continue talks with this goal in mind. NEA's position in 1993 and 1994 was exploratory. From this point on, NEA and AFT will seek a more cooperative relationship at all three levels.

What will that mean?
More joint actions right now. For example, NEA leaders are encouraging state and local affiliates to join with the AFT to stop the privatization of public schools and oppose federal education budget cuts.

What will merger talks mean for locals?
The NEA's new policy permits—on a limited basis and under certain conditions—mergers at the local level. For example, in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, when two school districts merged, the corresponding NEA and AFT locals were allowed to merge. Or in situations such as San Francisco, where the NEA and AFT have gone back and forth as the bargaining agent, a merger may be considered. At this time, NEA is still not permitting state affiliates to merge.

What's the status of merger talks now?
At presstime, NEA President Keith Geiger and AFT President Al Shanker have met to set guidelines for the merger discussions. Both NEA and AFT have named 10-person bargaining teams.

The NEA team includes Geiger, NEA Vice-President Bob Chase, Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan, Executive Director Don Cameron, Assistant Executive Director Evelyn Temple, NEA Director for Wisconsin Pat Gille, NEA-New York President Greg Nash, Oklahoma Education Association President Barbara Smith, NEA Director for Massachusetts Ernest Therrien, and Florida Teaching Profession-NEA President Aaron Wallace.

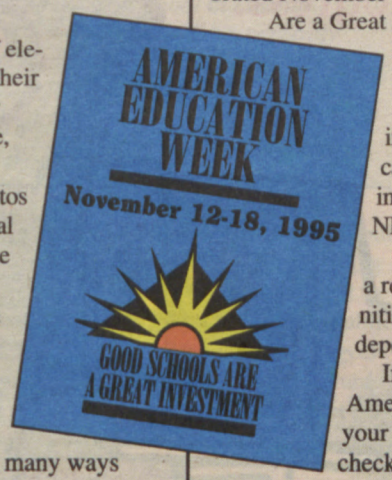
SPEAKING OUT ON THE ISSUES

Prime Time for Public Schools

In Uniontown, Pennsylvania, scores of elementary students form circles outside their school building in a "show of unity for public schools," then release red, white, and blue biodegradable balloons.

In Waukesha, Wisconsin, student photos appear on thousands of placemats in local restaurants with the slogan, "Building the Future One Student at a Time."

In Naperville, Illinois, educators and students conduct a "storefront school" in the local mall, demonstrating classroom lessons and hands-on learning for parents and public alike.



Those are just a few examples of the many ways schools and communities celebrated American Education Week last year, a time when public education takes center stage and school employees receive the recognition they deserve.

This year, American Education Week will be celebrated November 12-18. The theme: "Good Schools Are a Great Investment." November 15 is National Education Support Personnel Day.

"AEW celebrations are especially important because of the current political climate and our own goal of restoring confidence in public schools," says NEA President Keith Geiger.

"American citizens at all levels need a reminder that the future of our comunities and our nation in the years ahead depends on today's students."

If you're interested in coordinating American Education Week activities in your school district and need suggestions, check NEA Online (keyword: NEA Observances).

WORKING FOR YOU

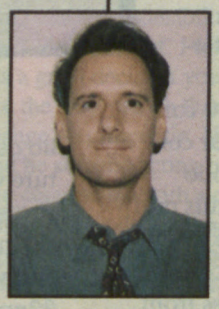
On the Cutting Edge

"It's our job to keep NEA at the forefront of new technology that will benefit the Association and NEA members, and I'm just a small part of that," says Don Blake, a technology analyst with the newly-formed NEA Center for Education Technology.

It's Blake's responsibility to help establish and maintain NEA's presence in cyberspace—from NEA's forum on America Online to a possible presence on the World Wide Web.

Blake is leading a team of NEA staff and leaders looking into the implications of bringing NEA closer to its members and the public via the Internet.

"I'm excited about the possibilities," Blake says. "I think our move to the Web will expand our technological reach and open up new worlds for NEA members," he says.



Blake, who came to NEA from the computer industry six years ago, also keeps the Association current on new software and provides technical assistance to NEA staff and state affiliates.

"It's overwhelming and gratifying to think that by working for NEA, I'm helping classrooms, school staff, and students across the country," says Blake.

NEA's Center for Education Technology acts as a clearinghouse on education technology and software, a key voice in legislative and political efforts to enhance classroom learning through technology, and a link between businesses and schools.

Other Center staff members include Barbara Yentzer, the Center's director, Barbara Stein, Sheila Adjahoe, and Carolyn Wilkins.

SHORT TAKES

Interested in UniServ?

➤ It's time to apply for the 1996 NEA Affirmative Action UniServ Intern Program, an opportunity for women and minority members interested in working as advocates for public schools and the men and women who work in them. Those selected attend a four-week training program and get a three-month field assignment toward becoming an NEA UniServ staff member.

To receive an application packet, send a letter of interest to Deloris Edwards Rozier, UniServ Intern Program Manager, c/o Brenda Vincent, NEA Membership and Affiliates, 1201 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. The deadline for letters of interest is December 15 by U.S. mail or Federal Express only. The final deadline for applications is January 29, 1996.

➤ Do you have a project targeting violence in your community? The National Student/Parent Mock Election program is sponsoring a competition for creative solutions to violence. Students and project leaders from the four top projects will each receive an airline ticket to Washington, D.C. The first prize winner will receive a trip overseas. For an application, write to ACTIONS, National Student/Parent Mock Election, 225 West Oro Valley Drive, Tucson, AZ 85737.

Portfolios are now in use all across the country.

Want to learn more about this innovative approach to assessing student progress?

You can find the why's and how-to's of portfolio assessment in these teacher-tested resources from the NEA Professional Library.

NEW

Portfolio Practices: Assessing and Thinking Through Children's Work

Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Schools that don't develop alternatives to traditional examinations risk the ultimate failure of their school reform efforts. You can avoid the pitfalls and backlash that many of your colleagues have experienced by adopting the portfolio practices detailed in this new book. Learn the "nuts and bolts" of student portfolios, find out how to think about assessment in fresh ways, explore the steps you can take to keep your innovative assessment practices from being stifled, and much more.
160pp. 1995. (1858-3-00-VZ) Regular Price: $16.95

Student Portfolios

NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books

Eight teachers discuss how they use portfolios to enhance learning in elementary and secondary classrooms. Learn from their classroom experiences how you can use portfolios to: collect and assess student work in a meaningful, hassle-free manner, help students assess their own progress, report student progress to parents, and build school credibility and accountability in the community.
96pp. 1993. (2901-1-00-VZ) Regular Price: $9.95

Portfolios: Assessing Learning in the Primary Grades

Marianne Lucas Lescher

A classroom teacher gives you her unique perspective on what research says to the teacher about portfolio assessment. Lescher blends an overview of the literature with her own action research findings and suggests strategies for selecting portfolio components, offers tips on innovative uses, and discusses the steps to take if you want to begin using student portfolios.
32pp. 1995. (1094-9-00-VZ) Regular Price: $4.95

Assessing Learning in the Classroom

A Report from NEA's National Center for Innovation

This is an overview of classroom assessment—assessment to inform teaching and improve learning, not to sort students and justify grades. It gives you principles of effective assessment, key questions in planning, the framework of different approaches and methods, and evaluation and communication methods.
32pp. 1995. Regular Price: $6.95
Special Member Price: $4.95 (1868-0-10-VZ)

Alternative Assessment

Teacher TV on VHS, Episode #11

This video looks at: using computer technology to allow students to document their own accomplishments, students judging one another's science fair projects, and students demonstrating achievements and setting goals at regular parent-teacher-student conferences.
22 min. 1992. (7760-1-00-VZ) Regular Price: $16.95

SPECIAL SET PRICE

Purchase all five of these Alternative Assessment titles and SAVE. Regular price for the individual titles would be $55.75. Use stock #1887-7-1S-VZ and Save 15%.

You pay only $47.39

ORDER TOLL FREE 1-800-229-4200

or mail to
NEA Professional Library
P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516

Shipping and handling will be added to all orders. Include CA or DC sales tax if applicable.

Debate

Should Kids Be Paid To Be Good?

YES

Elberta Ritchie has been a media specialist in Sumter County, Florida for 30 years, the last 25 at Wildwood High School. An active member of her local—and building rep for the past 22 years—Ritchie is a former chair of the Florida Teaching Profession's retirement committee.

Rewarding excellence is a basic tenet of American culture. In a perfect world, we would all work for the pleasure of doing a task well. In the real world, we all like perks.

As a media specialist watching technology pull my students from books, I support any incentive that will help motivate a student to discover the joys of reading. If that compromises my professional standards, as some see them, so be it.

Too much time, money, and energy have been spent rewarding non-performance. States fund programs for potential dropouts—not for those who stay in school and work to be successful. It's the American dream to work hard and be rewarded. Why not extend the system to include our students?

Let's start with why *not*. Because we prefer to offer our children the dry daily bread of education when we can so easily put a little jam on it? Because our next generation ought to want to learn for the sake of learning? Because we're afraid that once rewarded, students will only do work if rewarded again?

If the definition of learning is a change in a student's behavior, is it important how we got the student to take an interest in learning? Or is it important that, by hook or by crook, the student made that behavior change?

What other multimillion-dollar industry shares so little with its workers? We have little money to spend on frills—but, I ask you, is motivation a frill?

Three years ago, Wildwood High School staff developed an incentive program that, by all accounts, is wildly successful.

Here's how it works: Each six weeks, students start with a blank slate. Those who go the full 30 days with no unexcused absences, no discipline problems, and no *F*s can attend pizza, popcorn, and ice cream parties.

In addition, students with good grades become eligible for a program called the Winner's Circle of Wildcat Scholars. Prizes include donated televisions, VCRs, even, at year's end, a car.

If a student's grade point average is 3.0, one card with his or her name on it is placed in a bowl. Students with 3.5 averages get two cards; those with a 4.0 get three cards.

Drawings are held at the end of each six-week period and at the end of the year. Last year's grand prize was a 1991 Jeep Cherokee donated by the Sumter County sheriff's office.

Teachers say this is the best year ever for on-time attendance. And they report that many students are improving their academic performance.

Wildwood student Jericho Upham told me that as a freshman, he got mostly *C*s. But as he bought into the concept of the Winner's Circle, he worked harder, earning *A*s and *B*s.

The crowning moment for Jericho came when he showed his "green card" (indicating a 3.5 grade point average) to the local insurance agent—his car insurance was discounted a full 10 percent.

Another student told the local newspaper that the incentive program made her "try harder and feel good that I can make those kinds of grades." A third student's grades, attitude, and appearance took a definite turn for the better when rewards were part of the picture.

We're not buying grades—the students must do the work. We're rewarding the progress students make in taking responsibility and working toward goals. And we're helping to boost the self-esteem they so desperately need.

In my own experience as a learner, incentives work. One of my colleagues, Russ MacGregor, taught a night class for adults learning Spanish. He's always said a little "creative bribery" goes a long way.

He let us have pizza parties after class. And he helped teach the class to sing "Happy Birthday" to me in Spanish. I didn't know a Spanish class could be so much fun. Most of my other Spanish classes left me flustered and pulling out my hair by the fistfuls. Now I can't wait for Spanish II.

Having experienced incentives personally and having worked at a school both before and after an incentive program was put in place, I can only state: I work hard for a smile, but a t-shirt would be even nicer.

NO

Lorna Hockett is a veteran fifth grade teacher at Waldport Elementary School in Lincoln County, Oregon. She's currently treasurer of her local, a member of the Oregon Education Association board of directors, and a member of the NEA Diversity Training Cadre.

In this time of attacks on public education, it's tempting to take the easy way out to show parents and the public that what we do is productive and gets results quickly. It's tempting to award gold stars for sitting still, pizzas for reading books, even cash just for coming to school.

But paying kids to be good is a too-easy, short-term scheme that, in the long-term, doesn't work.

Case in point: I've got a boy in my room right now—let's call him Johnny. Johnny's mother is in jail. He's had very little home life and not much love. Because of Johnny's behavior problems, he's been in a special program for the past two years.

Teachers have tried to reach him in all kinds of ways. But the stars and stickers and happy-grams didn't work.

When he came to my room, I told him he was great, that he deserves respect, that he can handle responsibility. I told him he could help me out. I told him, "That was a great decision you made," and "I like the way you do that."

The change was dramatic. He brightened—and he stopped acting out.

He even came to me with a question. "If I can help Billy relax and work, can we sit together?" We talked about ways to help Billy calm down. Then I told Johnny that if he was successful, he could sit next to his friend, because he'd earned that trust.

Everyday now, he shows me that he knows he's valued and respected. No matter what you're prepared to pay, you can't buy that for a child.

My way takes time and doesn't produce easily trackable results in the short term. But I'm reaching for long-term goals. I'm interested in teaching my students to be life-long learners, to make their own decisions with integrity and confidence, to have personal power.

The amount of personal power they'll have depends on how much impact they think they have on the world around them.

If my students have clear internal values and beliefs that guide their lives and determine their actions, they'll have what's called an internal locus of control.

People with an internal locus of control believe that their decisions and actions determine the course of their lives. They accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions, both positive and negative.

They project confidence, self-respect, and self-acceptance. They understand that power is used not to control others, but to effect change and control of their own lives.

Other people have an external locus of control. They believe their destiny is predetermined and trust in luck or fate to resolve problems or bring success.

Externally motivated people—like those who perform for monetary gain—often feel angry or hostile toward others because their lives seem out of control and they're looking for someone to blame.

After all, they reason, if someone else is in charge of life's rewards, someone else is also in charge of life's problems.

Externally motivated people don't believe they can make an impact on people and situations in their lives, so they take little responsibility for their feelings or behavior.

I want my students to have an internal locus of control. When they're older, I want them to work not for the paycheck, but for the satisfaction of the job.

Trust me, given my paycheck, I would never have become a teacher—but for the internal rewards. So far this year, I've gotten Johnny smiling and offering to help another boy. That's what I'm working for.

I learned a long time ago that giving kids a little chart to put happy faces on keeps them good for 30 seconds. Talking to them with respect, offering them responsibility and trust keeps them good for hours.

Do you want short-term results accompanied by long-term aggression and lack of responsibility? Or do you want long-term results with integrity? I want the long-term results.

Offering kids money for good behavior—or anything else—sends the wrong message. Such rewards produce a generation of externally motivated citizens that we, as a society, don't want and can't afford.

Letters

UNLISTED NUMBER

In a perfect world, it would be ideal to be able to live in the community where one teaches (Debate, October). Mary Nicholas Lloyd-Booker cites some great advantages to being readily accessible to parents and the community as a whole, but I agree with debater Karen Bell's assessment. Often the hassles greatly outweigh the benefits.

There are a few things that weren't mentioned in the debate that occur when students have easy access to the telephones and homes of teachers—personal property damage, harassing and obscene phone calls, and threats of violence. In my small community, there have been a number of these acts committed.

Teacher's homes have been egged and spray painted, cars have been vandalized, and threats made. The numbers of prank calls and obscene messages left on answering machines is staggering. Several teachers have been unmercifully stalked by a student, only to find no legal recourse against the minor since no criminal act was committed.

Would anyone feel comfortable taking out the garbage only to find a student sitting at the curb yelling obscenities? Because of acts like these, many teachers are forced to move out of the community in which they teach, and most have unlisted phone numbers.

Beverly Martz
Poland, Ohio

I feel for Karen Bell, and I hope her experiences aren't often repeated. But I highly support Mary Nicholas Lloyd-Booker's position.

I live just two blocks from my school, which allows me to serve as a commissioner in the town, interact on a daily basis with students, parents, and grandparents, and walk to work, setting an ecological example for others and saving valuable commuting time.

Margot Massie
Sudlersville, Maryland

JUSTIFICATION

I have often found myself looking for reasons to justify a federal Department of Education (National News, October). How about a clearinghouse of useful information for educators looking for jobs?

I've been horrified to find that there doesn't seem to be any centralized place where teachers and administrators searching for jobs can connect with districts that need people.

I was particularly surprised to find that the federal Department of Education does not maintain any listing of districts that qualify for student loan cancellation or forgiveness programs for teachers. So I wrote to 14 state departments of education and, with the exception of North Carolina, state staffers didn't seem to know what I was requesting either.

A clearinghouse would benefit everyone, especially the students whose schools need quality teachers.

Ingrid Rose
Tucson, Arizona

FEED THE CHILDREN

As a long-time bleeding heart, knee-jerk, fuzzy-headed liberal, I have no problem with people calling me names. I must take issue, however, with my fellow educators (Letters, September) on the topic of hungry students.

The mega-corporation we call America discards more wasted food daily than its numerous poor children could possibly eat. Cut the Defense budget by 2 percent, and we might really improve our schools—and have enough left over to provide prime rib for every teacher.

Sure, many parents misspend welfare checks, leaving their children barely fed or ill-nourished. Do we then join these parents and also ignore their famished children?

I agree something isn't right in this richest of all possible countries. Funding our burgeoning weight loss industry is enough of a headache without having to worry about hungry kids.

Gary Domazlicky
Three Rivers, California

My hat's off to Dennis Hurst (Letters, September). He has got to be one of the few sane teachers in America. I, too, am tired of fourth and fifth generation welfare children and parents who think the world owes them everything.

Lou Meyer
Rancho Cordova, California

HOW'D IT END?

I'm pleased to see the addition of SchoolSite, your new feature highlighting efforts of NEA members to "make schools run better."

Administrators here were impressed by "Power Lunch" (SchoolSite, October), which showed food service workers taking charge of cafeterias in my district and in Buffalo, New York. They asked me if cafeteria workers can do it, can bus drivers manage their own shops, too? Of course, I said yes.

There were, however, two serious problems with the story. First, the caption incorrectly identifies food service manager Shirley Urbanek. And second, the last line of the article was cut off. How did it end?

Carol Berzansky
Brunswick, Ohio

Editor's Note: NEA Today *apologizes for the errors. The final sentence of the story should have read: "We showed everybody we could do it," Urbanek adds.*

RESOLUTE

How ironic that Section B-8 of the 1995-96 Resolutions endorses the use of nonsexist language by all schools, while Section B-9 supports the celebration of a Lesbian and Gay History Month. Why not call it a Homosexual Month and eliminate the sexism?

Why do we need separate terms to denote the sex of the individuals involved in homosexuality? For that matter, why is this issue being addressed by the NEA in the first place? Let's use our resources for issues that concern the classroom.

Leon Linderwell
Fullerton, California

I was glad to read Resolution F-50, which states that the Association opposes "source taxing" of pensions of non-resident retirees. It's probably one of the states' best kept secrets, and for that reason, it's important that this issue be publicized as much as possible.

You would do a great service to strongly urge NEA members to support Senate Bill S. 44 and House Bill H.R. 394, both of which would ban states from taxing nonresidents.

Albert Dube
Yucaipa, California

It is with sadness and concern that I see the 1995-96 NEA Resolutions covering everything from politics to matters of personal discretion. It seems these resolutions represent a radical social change agenda, not one concerned with the education of our youth.

It was with equal sadness that I noticed a scarcity of resolutions pertaining to what teaching is all about. Let us leave the realm of politics and social change out of education. Let us spend our time and money educating students.

Robert MacDonald
Kelseyville, California

As a white male who's been constantly blamed for most, if not all, of the world's ills—including war, racism, sexism, the hole in the ozone layer, and the failure of the Chicago Cubs to win a World Series—it was indeed a relief to me to find out that I'm at last a member of a victimized group, those who are left-handed (NEA Resolution B-6).

My only question is why stop with just the rights of left-handed students?

Why not support a whole range of rights that we left-handers have done without for far too long?

What about Left-Handed Studies programs at our leading universities? Since we compose 15 percent of the population, have you checked to make sure that at least 15 percent of all NEA delegates to the next Rep Assembly are left-handed?

How about 15 percent of all admissions to law and medical schools? What about 15 percent of all letter-writers to *NEA Today*?

The 1995 NEA RA deserves the heartfelt thanks of all those manipulatively challenged people who didn't realize how much more interesting life can be when you can blame all your failings on the fact that you're a member of an NEA-recognized victims group.

Richard Slater
Camano Island, Washington

BIG-TIME BIAS

"Should School Begin with a Moment of Silence?" (Debate, September) was an interesting read. I was particularly interested in Bob Croddy's perception of the rural South, which is the most biased and stereotyped I've read for a long time.

Croddy writes, "Perhaps in some small homogeneous communities in the rural South, it would be possible to establish a religious practice in the local school without offending anyone and without prompting a lawsuit." He refers to "the rural South"—I wonder why he doesn't refer to the rural North, East, or West?

He seems to think that if you're homogeneous and rural and Southern, that you're different, even weird or something. I expected a lot more from a science teacher from Arkansas.

Richard Birch
Old Zollarsville, Pennsylvania

GRANTED

I teach in two very small, rural districts in Indiana, and our eyes have just been opened to the world of grant writing. The few we have applied for have really helped expand our curriculum.

So I was impressed to read in "Taking the Plunge into Cyberspace" (Cover story, September) how much a US West grant meant to Colorado teacher Joan Berryman.

LETTER FROM: *New Cumberland, Pennsylvania*

The Golden Rule Still Applies

Large, old houses nestled comfortably along tree-lined streets with spacious, grassy backyards and schools in walking distance—this was the scene of my childhood.

I grew up in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, along the west bank of the Susquehanna River in a time and place that many perceive as idyllic. Looking back, I think it *was* idyllic. It was not, however, utopia.

Our next door neighbor suffered from schizophrenia. She was a widow of many years, but she would accost my mother as she hung wash on the line and accuse her of stealing her husband. Another neighbor down the street also suffered from delusions and would occasionally walk down the hill to catch the bus in her slip, a hat, and high heels.

As children, we found these incidents incredibly amusing. We were always polite, though. Our parents had taught us to tolerate eccentricities and enjoy differences. We were taught that the Golden Rule is truly the credo for living in a civilized society.

When I grew up and moved away from my sleepy suburb to go to college, I was shocked at the intolerance I observed. In the late 1960s and early '70s, the prejudice I observed most was racism. I didn't understand how or why some people could treat other people so badly based on the color of their skin. I viewed racism with the same incomprehension as senseless vandalism—what's the purpose?

As I grew older, I encountered different prejudices. I experienced bias against women. I found out that most of the time, you can't change people's minds about their prejudices. I learned that no one has a corner on the truth.

I've been fortunate enough to have a wide variety of experiences in my life. I've taught every grade, 6-12. I've been a professional actress and stage manager. I've traveled a bit and written a bit and read a lot. I've met a fabulous array of people, and I've found that most of them have something interesting to say or to share. Tolerate eccentricities and enjoy differences—it's a mantra that's allowed me to have a wonderful time with some real characters.

Last February, I was reading message boards in NEA Online, and I found a folder in the political action file called "Hot-Button Issues." Curiosity being my middle name, I opened it to find a message titled "Our Gay Youth." In this message, a teacher asked how other educators dealt with young people who had sexual identity issues.

Since that time, there has been a barrage of response from colleagues throughout the country. Several say they are "fed up" with NEA and its position on issues that they claim are not educational, sexual orientation being one of them.

They couldn't be more wrong.

NEA is *my* organization as much as anyone else's. I've belonged for more than 20 years. Certainly NEA has taken positions that I don't agree with—how could it not? It's an organization with over two million members. A number of resolutions are passed every year that I shake my head over. But I know that any group can form a caucus and present resolutions at the annual NEA Representative Assembly.

Resolution B-9, which has created such a storm, merely recognizes the importance of raising awareness and eliminating sexual orientation stereotypes in the educational setting. Sounds like tolerance of someone else's differences to me.

I'm an American. I absolutely disagree with many of the laws the federal government passes. I disagree with many of the ways it spends "my" money. Am I going to "quit" America? Of course not! It's my right to be here, and I love my country, warts and all.

No large organization is going to espouse only things *you* believe in. The key to having the organization be as close as you want it to be to your philosophy is to get involved! The only true reform comes from within.

And I still believe that the Golden Rule is the credo for a civilized society.

Michele Casey teaches eighth grade English and is the communication chair for the Cumberland Valley Education Association.

Can you please send me information on the US West grant? Also, do you know if there is a way to find out about other grants? I'm sure there are hundreds out there. I just don't know how to find them.

Laura Fortson
Valparaiso, Indiana

Editor's Note: To reach the US West Foundation Information Service, call 800/843-3383. For more information on grants, check out NEA Online, keyword NEAGrants.

THANKS

The September issue prompts three notes:

1) The information in the article about the 15 local reform grants NEA funded at the Representative Assembly was great. Could you print follow-up articles that highlight successes these winners create?

2) I appreciate the letter from Oklahoma City telling how Americans and teachers care about each other.

3) The letters about school lunches remind me of a year when I paid for a student's lunch for three days because his mother had not returned the new application form for the free lunch program. On the fourth day, the student reported that his mother sent the application in. "That's great," I said. "Did the application get here before lunch or after?" "Before," he said, "and I bought cookies." "You did?" I answered. His reply: "I had the money."

Beverly Shearon
Raleigh, North Carolina

LAST WORD—NOT!

I hope that a recent letter ("The Last Word," September) doesn't discourage readers from setting up peer mediation programs.

According to the Children's Defense Fund, nearly 135,000 students in the United States carry a gun to school each day. As educators, we should be doing whatever we can to reduce the violence in our communities.

The letter writer says he sends his child to school to learn and not to "counsel." What could be a more valuable lesson to a child than learning to resolve conflicts without violence?

The benefits of a well-organized program are many. For staff, it can decrease the amount of time spent settling disputes among students. For student mediators, it can develop leadership skills, boost self-esteem, and enhance communication skills.

Most important, peer mediation can increase the likelihood that, when they grow up, today's kids will use peaceful means to resolve problems.

Karyn LaCroix
Wheaton, Maryland

Mediation is a beneficial tool used to curb violent confrontations, solve disagreements, and bring communication skills to all participants. It is *not*, as a previous letter writer stated, counseling.

Mediation is a safe, confidential process that allows both parties to state their point of view, listen to each other, and work out a solution together that benefits both of them. Mediation is not an "education fad." It's a process that works to bring people together whether in a school, work, or family environment.

Susan Leavell
Bremerton, Washington

GET WITH IT

Your frequent calls to get "online! online! online!" and "get students ready for the 21st century" are tiresome. My watchwords are: "Let's drag the schools into the 20th century, before the 21st begins."

By the 21st century, the tools for communications will be beyond what teachers are just getting into now. Granted, it's exciting when we finally get the tools that were new five, 10, or 50 years ago—we feel privileged to be behind the times!

Still, I can dream, can't I? After all, the laser discs alone for "Cosmic Chemistry" cost the equivalent of 66 percent of my entire year's budget. Today's bottom line: I'll settle for a phone, plenty of chalk, and some excited students. Aloha.

Ted Braddstrom
Honolulu, Hawaii

CLOTHES MAKE THE...

I'm excited to hear that the new superintendent in Seattle is in favor of a districtwide dress code.

If we in the public schools should learn anything from the private sector and the military, it's that organizations can't function effectively without the conformity of their members.

Conformity consists of specific codes of conduct that satisfy the needs of the organization before the desire of the individual. One of these codes of conduct is self-discipline, another is cooperation, and a third is dress code.

Dress codes develop an organizational identity, and consequently, an organizational purpose. Schools are social organizations.

Why do the private sector and the military function more effectively than we do? The answer lies right in front of us, but, unfortunately, we don't want to see it or accept it.

Victor Scott
Seattle, Washington

QUICK DRAW

Before becoming a teacher, I was a salesman, and business cards were essential to my business. Once in the classroom, I found I was lost without them.

They're handy to give students, parents, administrators, and anyone else who may want to contact you. The cost is well offset by the time saved writing down phone numbers.

One tip: Have the card at your fingertips. If you have to fumble for a card, it loses its effectiveness. Practice being quick-draw artist "Billy the Card." Use your business cards often and you'll save time and improve communications.

James DeLoach
Stockton, California

Let's Talk!

Letters are edited for length and clarity. Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:

- ✔ By mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.
- ✔ By FAX: 202/822-7206.
- ✔ By phone: 202/822-7201.
- ✔ By NEA Online: Keyword NEA Today. To subscribe to NEA Online, call 800/827-6364. Note preferred customer number 16889.
- ✔ By e-mail. Write to NEA Today@aol.com.

NOW...

NO ANNUAL FEE

Now you can save even more with the NEA's credit cards.

6.9% introductory Annual Percentage Rate on cash advances and balance transfers† ♦ No annual fee ♦ A competitive 16.35% variable Annual Percentage Rate (APR) on purchases ♦ Big travel savings on airfares and accommodations available exclusively through GoldPassage® Travel Services ♦ No liability for lost or stolen cards.*

Call **1-800-468-7632** today or send in the completed form below.

nea Member Benefits

MBNA AMERICA® Member FDIC

☐ **YES!** I wish to apply for the NEA Premier Gold MasterCard card today! I understand that if my application for the Premier Gold MasterCard is not approved, this request constitutes an application for the NEA School Days MasterCard card, and I accept that on a periodic basis I will be considered for an automatic upgrade to the Premier Gold MasterCard at MBNA America's discretion. All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America®. The NEA is not involved in the credit application process; standard credit procedure is followed. This is not an application for a corporate account.

To apply, please complete the information below.

30:900-954
16:900-954
IEOD-V

Please Print

ABOUT YOU

Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip
Home Phone ( )	Work Phone ( )	
Social Security Number	Date of Birth	
State Association		
Mother's Maiden Name or Code Word (For identification purposes when you request special action taken on your account.)		

ABOUT YOUR FINANCES

Employer	Position
Years There	Annual Salary* $
Other Income* $	Source

*Alimony, child support, or separate maintenance income need not be revealed if you do not wish it considered as a basis of repayment.

Previous Employer or School Attended (If less than 3 years with current employer.)

Do you: ☐ Own home? ☐ Rent?

Monthly Payment $

Current Credit Card Accounts (if applicable):
☐ MasterCard® ☐ Visa® ☐ American Express® ☐ MBNA®

Previous Address (Must be completed if at present address less than 3 years.)

I have read this application, and everything I have stated in it is true. MBNA America Bank, N.A., is authorized to check my credit, employment history or any other pertinent information and to report to others such information and credit experience with me. I understand that the acceptance or use of any card issued will be subject to the terms of this application and the Credit Card Agreement that will be sent with the card, and agree to be responsible for all charges incurred according to such terms.

By signing this application, I certify that I am a member in good standing of the National Education Association.

X
Applicant Signature Date

All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America. The NEA is not involved in the credit application process; standard credit procedure is followed.

The program is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A. The program is currently not available in Massachusetts, California, the District of Columbia, Michigan or Pennsylvania.

Any account opened in response to this offer will be governed by the laws of Delaware.

Mail your signed application to:
NEA Credit Card Program
c/o MBNA America Bank, N.A.
P.O. Box 15464
Wilmington, DE 19850-5464

†Annual Percentage Rate (APR)	16.35% for purchases, which may vary.
Variable Rate	Your rate is determined by adding one margin to the U.S. Prime Rate as published in the *Wall Street Journal* on the 15th of March, June, September, and December. The margin is 7.6% percentage points. On September 15, 1995 the U.S. Prime Rate was 8.75%.
Annual Fee	None.
Grace Period for Repayment of Balances for Purchases	At least 25 days from statement closing date.
Method of Computing the Balance for Purchases	Average daily balance (including new purchases).
Transaction Fee for Purchases	Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, money orders, bets, lottery tickets, and casino gaming chips: 2% of each such purchase; $2 minimum, $10 maximum.
Transaction Fee for Cash Advances and Fees for Paying Late or Exceeding the Credit Limit	Transaction fee for bank and ATM cash advances: 2% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Transaction fee for Premium Access Check® or Preferred Access Check® cash advances: 1% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Late Payment Fee: $10 Over-the-Credit-Limit Fee: $10

The current APR for cash advances is 6.9% through your first six statement closing dates commencing the month after your account is opened. Thereafter, the APR will vary and will apply to both new and outstanding cash advance balances. The current indexed APR for cash advances is 16.35% which may vary. The transaction fee for two specially designated Premium Access Checks® or Preferred Access Checks® will be waived. Cash advances cannot be used to pay off or pay down another MBNA® account.

*Certain restrictions apply to these and other benefits described in the benefits brochures sent soon after your account is opened.

GoldPassage Travel Services are the responsibility of, and are provided to MBNA customers by an independently owned and operated travel agency.

MBNA, MBNA America®, GoldPassage, Premium Access Checks and Preferred Access Checks are federally registered service marks of MBNA America Bank, N.A. MasterCard® is a federally registered service mark of MasterCard International, Inc., used pursuant to license. Visa® is a federally registered service mark of Visa U.S.A., Inc., used pursuant to license.

The NEA Credit Card program is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A.

The NEA Credit Card program has been developed for NEA members only. If a member decides not to renew his/her membership, that person will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates and fees offered through the NEA Credit Card program. If eligible, a replacement card will be offered.

The information about the costs of the card described in this application is accurate as of 9/95. The information may have changed after that date. To find out what may have changed, call us at 1-800-468-7632.

©1995 MBNA America Bank, N.A. 11/95

Blank Page
Intentionally
Inserted by
GWU Special
Collections

GEICO car insurance. Consider it a benefit for giving our children your best.

You teach our children the facts and skills that help shape them into capable individuals. You devote countless hours to their progress. And you do it because you care. **At GEICO we care,** too, and want you to know that your efforts do not pass unnoticed. Our studies show that educators are some of the most **responsible drivers** around. That's why we reward your safe driving with very low rates. One call to GEICO could surprise you with significant **savings of 15% or more.**

But that's just the beginning of the great savings. You may also save if you're over the age of 50. And if you drive a safe car, GEICO offers discounts for anti-lock brakes, airbags and safety belts. Further, in most states our multi-car discount saves you up to 25% on each car you insure under the same policy.

Recognizing The Heart Of A Good Education • GEICO •

GEICO is rated **A++ (Superior)** by the A.M. Best Company, respected independent analysts of the insurance industry. What's more, with GEICO you get the convenience of **complete 24-hour service** every day of the year.

The choice is yours. You can go on paying high car insurance rates, or you can pick up the phone and call **1-800-841-5660.** Be sure to have your current policy handy, so we can tell you in a matter of minutes exactly how much you could save.

Call 1-800-841-5660, now.

GEICO

The sensible alternative.℠

Detach and keep in your wallet

Use this chart to see what GEICO could save you on your car insurance.

YOUR CURRENT COVERAGE		YOUR CURRENT PREMIUM	GEICO PREMIUM	YOU SAVE
Bodily Injury: _____ Per Person _____ Per Occurrence	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Property Damage: _____ Per Occurrence	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Personal Injury Protection or Medical Payments: _____ Per Person	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Uninsured Motorists: _____ Per Person _____ Per Occurrence _____ Property Damage	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Comprehensive (Your Car): _____ Deductible	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Collision (Your Car): _____ Deductible	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Rental Reimbursement: _____ Per Disablement	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Government Employees Insurance Co. • GEICO General Insurance Co. • GEICO Indemnity Co. • GEICO Casualty Co. These shareholder-owned companies are not affiliated with the U.S. Government. GEICO auto insurance is not available in MA or NJ. GEICO: Washington, DC 20076.		GEICO SAVES YOU THIS MUCH....		$

Call GEICO today at 1-800-841-5660 for a free quote. We'll give you a line-by-line comparison with your current coverage so you can see the savings. Where available, you can use your MasterCard, VISA, Discover®Card or personal checking account for instant coverage. For better service when you call, please have your current policy and all vehicle identification numbers and driver's license numbers handy.

Call 1-800-841-5660, 24 hours a day, for a great value on car insurance.
Or check the yellow pages for a local office near you.

GEICO
The sensible alternative.℠

© 1995 GEICO

Cost Comparison
I.D. # 4875